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THE

HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES

OF THE

ANGLO-SAXON CHURCH.

VOLUME II.

THE

HISTORY AND ANTIQUITIES

OF

THE ANGLO-SAXON CHURCH;

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF

ITS ORIGIN, GOVERNMENT, DOCTRINES, WORSHIP,

REVENUES, AND CLERICAL AND

MONASTIC INSTITUTIONS.

BY

JOHN LINGARD, D.D.

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CHAPTER VIII.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES.

BENEDICTION OF KNIGHTS—LAW OF ESPOUSALS—CEREMONY OF MARRIAGE—BENEDICTION OF VIRGINS—AND WIDOWS—QUALIFICATIONS FOR ORDERS—ORDINATION OF DEACONS—OF PRIESTS—OF BISHOPS—FORM OF CORONATION OF KINGS—CONSECRATION OF CHURCHES—OF ALTARS—DEDICATION OF THE CHURCHES OF RIPON—OF RAMSEY—AND OF WINCHCOMBE.

In the more early ages the preachers of the gospel had at the same time to contend with paganism and gnosticism; with paganism, which had peopled the earth, air, and sea with imaginary deities; and with gnosticism, which looked upon the whole visible world as the work of the power of darkness. To combat these contradictory but popular errors, to teach her children that all things were created by the wisdom, and might be directed to the service, of the Almighty, the Christian church was accustomed from the earliest ages to invoke, by set forms of prayer, the blessing of Heaven on everything adapted to the divine worship, or to the support and convenience of man. In this respect her conduct was an exact copy of that which God had recommended to the Jewish legislator; and was justified by

the doctrine of the apostle, that "every creature of God is good, being sanctified by the word of God and by prayer."[1] From the sacramentary of Gelasius, these forms of benediction had passed to the sacramentary of St. Gregory; and from that work they were transcribed into the rituals of the Anglo-Saxon church.[2] The greater part of them would, perhaps, fatigue the patience, instead of interesting the curiosity, of the reader: these I shall therefore omit, and confine myself in the present chapter to the description of those which had for their object to implore the divine blessing on the different states of society.

I. That there existed among our ancestors, from the earliest times, a species of knighthood or military distinction, which was afterwards commuted for the more splendid and romantic chivalry of later ages, has been satisfactorily proved by a recent historian.[3] But at first it was a merely civil institution, unknown among the rites of ecclesiastical worship.[4] Religion was the daughter of peace: she abhorred the deeds of war; and refused to bless the arms which were destined to be stained with human blood. But in the revolution

[1] 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5.

[2] To those belonging to the two sacramentaries were afterwards added others, of which the authors are unknown. Many of these assumed the form of charms rather than prayers, and were admitted into collections according to the taste of the collectors. See several in the publication by the Surtees Society, under the title of the Durham Ritual. Note (A) at the end.

[3] Mr. Turner, Hist. of the Anglo-Saxons, vol. iv. p. 171.

[4] It seems originally to have been conferred by the sovereign, and perhaps the more distinguished among the thanes. Alfred the Great is said by Malmesbury to have knighted his grandson Athelstan while he was yet a child. Quem etiam præmature militem fecerat, donatum chlamyde coccinea, gemmato balteo, ense Saxonico, cum vagina aurea. —Malm. de Reg. l. ii. p. 210.

of a few centuries, the sentiments of men were altered. To unsheath the sword against the enemies of the nation; to protect by force of arms the church, the widow, and the infant, were actions which humanity approved; the warrior, who hazarded his life in such laudable pursuits, deserved the blessing of Heaven; and before the extinction of the Saxon dynasty we behold the order of knighthood conferred with all the pomp of a religious ceremony. The youth who aspired to this honour was taught to repair on the preceding day to a priest, to confess his sins with compunction of heart, and to obtain the benefit of absolution. The succeeding night he spent in the church; and by watching, devotion, and abstinence, prepared himself for the approaching ceremony. In the morning, at the commencement of the mass, his sword was laid on the altar. After the gospel, the priest read over it the prayer of benediction, carried it to the knight, and laid it on his shoulder. The mass was then continued; he received the eucharist, and from that moment was entitled to the rank and privileges of a legitimate miles.[1]

For this account we are indebted to the pen of Ingulf, where he relates the exploits of an Anglo-Saxon soldier, whose valour deserved and obtained the honour of knighthood. His name was Hereward. In his youth

[1] Ingulf, f. 512. I have not met with any Anglo-Saxon ritual which mentions the prayer used on this occasion. In a MS. written long after the Conquest it is introduced as follows:—Deus, . . . concede huic famulo tuo, qui sincero corde gladio se primo nititur cingere militari, ut in omnibus galea tuæ virtutis sit protectus: et sicut David et Judith contra gentis suæ hostes fortitudinis potentiam et victoriam tribuisti: ita tuo auxilio munitus contra hostium suorum sævitiam victor ubique existat, et ad sanctæ ecclesiæ tutelam proficiat. Amen.

the turbulence of his temper had alienated the affections of his family; and by Edward the Confessor he was banished, at the request of his father, from his native country. In Northumberland, Cornwall, Ireland, and Flanders, the bravery of the fugitive was displayed and admired; his fame soon reached the ears of his countrymen: the martial deeds of Hereward formed the subject of the most popular ballads; and his family were proud of the man whom they had formerly persecuted. When William the Conqueror landed in England, he returned to the defence of his country; and at the head of his followers avenged the injuries which his mother had received from the invaders. It was at this period that he repaired to Peterborough, to obtain from the abbot Brand, his uncle, the belt of knighthood.[1] But the sequel proves that Hereward was little better than a barbarian. His hatred to the Normans was incapable of distinguishing between friend and foe. His uncle died: Turold, a Norman, was appointed to succeed him; and though Hereward had sworn fealty to the abbey, though the monks were his countrymen, and had been his benefactors, he determined to enrich himself with the plunder of their church. As the gate could not easily be forced, his impatience set fire to the nearest houses; he burst through the flames, despised the tears and supplications of the brotherhood, and carried off the riches of the monastery. The spoils which he thus sacrilegiously acquired, and the conflagration of the town and abbey, of which only the church

[1] Ing. ibid. In the council of London, held by St. Anselm, in 1102, this Anglo-Saxon custom was abolished, and the abbots were forbidden to confer the dignity of knighthood.—Wilk. Con. tom. i. p. 382.

and one apartment remained standing, are described with lamentations by the historians of Peterborough.[1] Courage appears to have supplied the place of every other virtue in the estimation of this Anglo-Saxon warrior; and he is, unfortunately, the only one who has been transmitted to posterity in the character of a knight.

II. The importance of conjugal fidelity was understood and enforced by the ancient Saxons even before their conversion to Christianity. The jealousy of the husband guarded with severity the honour of his bed; and the offending wife was frequently compelled to be herself the executioner of his vengeance. With her own hands she fastened the halter to her neck; her strangled body was thrown into the flames; and over her ashes was suspended the partner of her guilt. On other occasions he delivered her to the women of the neighbourhood, who were eager to avenge on their unfortunate victim the honour of the female character. They stripped her to the girdle, and scourged her from village to village, till she sunk under the severity of the punishment.[2] But if the justice of the Saxons was inexorable to the disturbers of connubial happiness, they indulged themselves in a greater latitude of choice than was conceded to the more polished nations, whom the wisdom of civil and religious legislators had restrained from marrying within certain degrees of kindred. The son hesitated not to take to his bed the relict of his deceased father; nor was the widow of the dead ashamed to accept the hand of the surviving

[1] Hug. Cand. p. 48. Chron. Sax. p. 176.
[2] Ep. St. Bonif. ad Ethelbald. apud Wilk. p. 88.

brother.[1] These illicit unions shocked the piety of the first missionaries; and to their anxious inquiries, Gregory the Great returned a moderate and prudent answer. He considered the ignorance of the Saxons as deserving of pity rather than severity; commanded the prohibition of marriage, which was regularly extended to the seventh, to be restricted to the first and second generations; and advised the missionaries to separate the converts who were contracted within these degrees, and exhort them to marry again, according to the ecclesiastical canons.[2] The indulgence of the pontiff alarmed the zealots of Italy; and in a letter to Felix, bishop of Messina, he condescended to justify his conduct, on the ground that every possible concession ought to be made to the former habits of the proselytes; and that it was his intention to restore the ancient discipline, in proportion as the necessity for its suspension decreased.[3] By the Saxon prelates, the will of the pontiff was understood and gradually obeyed. In the eighth century, marriages within the fourth degree were strictly forbidden; and by the commencement of the eleventh, the prohibition was extended to the sixth.[4] At this point it remained stationary till the Norman conquest.

"If a man wish to betroth a maiden or a woman," says one of the dooms of King Edmund, "and it be agreeable to her and her friends, then it is right that the bridegroom, according to the law of God and the customs of the world, first promise and give a 'wed'

[1] Bed. i. c. 27; ii. c. 5.
[2] Bed. i. c. 27.
[3] Ep. Greg. ad Felic. apud Smith, App. p. 685. Bed. Oper. Min. p. 242.
[4] Wilk. Con. pp. 121, 301.

[a pledge] to those that are her 'fore-speakers,' that he desires her in such wise that he will keep her according to God's law, as a husband should keep his wife; and let his friends guarantee that."[1] After this preliminary, three questions remained to be settled: 1st. What sum he would pay to him to whom the "foster lean" belonged; that is, probably, the person under whose tutelage she was; 2nd. What present (perhaps the morgan gift) he would make to her "in case she chose his will," the very words in which the vassal swore fealty to his lord; and 3rd. What dower he would settle upon her, if it happened that she survived him; which dower could not be less than one-third of his property, but might be augmented to one-half, or even to the whole, if he left issue by her.[2] In conclusion, when the parties were agreed, they mutually gave "weds and borhs," pledges and sureties to each other; he, that he would fulfil the conditions; her kinsfolk, that they would deliver her to him. Thus they were "wedded" or betrothed;[3] but the marriage did not necessarily follow. If the bridegroom suffered two years to expire without demanding the delivery of the "bride," he incurred the "bot of borhbryce," or penalty for breach of covenant; if the demand was met with a refusal on the part of the bride, he received

[1] Thorpe, i. 254.

[2] Ibid. and in the Laws of Ine, lvii. pp. 139, 255.

[3] In the Thesaurus Novus Anecdotorum (tom. i.) are many of these marriage settlements in other Teutonic nations, but none, as far as I know, have been preserved belonging to our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. It is, however, plain, from accidental notices in the laws and in wills which have come down to us, that the husband and wife held separate estates during marriage. If she became liable to a "bot," or penalty, she paid it out of her own property, otherwise her kinsfolk for her.—Ibid. 256.

back the money which he had paid, with a bot amounting to one-third of that sum. In either case the engagement was dissolved.[1]

On the other hand, it was ordered that at the "giftan," or nuptials, which took place on the third day before the time fixed for the consummation of the marriage, "a mass-priest should be present to bind their union with God's blessing to all prosperity."[2] The parties, attended by their respective friends, met in the porch of the church; and the priest, taking the ring, blessed it with a prayer, and gave it to the bridegroom, who placed it on the middle finger of the left hand of the bride. He then resumed in the following words:—"May God the Father bless you; may Jesus Christ preserve you; may the Holy Ghost enlighten you; may the Lord look down upon you, and give you peace, and fill you with every spiritual blessing, to the remission of all your sins, and the possession of everlasting life. Amen." He then led them into the chancel, where they remained during the celebration of mass. They made their offering at the usual time, and at the "Ter sanctus" prostrated themselves at the lowest step of the altar, while a purple veil was held over them. Immediately before the Pax Domini, the priest turned to them, and, with his arms extended, pronounced the nuptial benediction: "O God, who by thy power didst

[1] Ibid. Ine, xxxi. p. 123. Puella desponsata, si non vult habitare cum eo viro cui est desponsata, reddatur ei pecunia quam pro ipsa dedit, et tertia pars addatur. Si autem ille noluerit, perdat pecuniam quam pro illa dedit.—Thorpe, ii. p. 11.

[2] Thorpe, i. 256. But the celebration of the nuptials was forbidden on great festivals, on the Ember days, from the beginning of Advent till the octave day of the Epiphany, and from Septuagesima Sunday till a fortnight after Easter.—Ibid. and p. 320.

create all things out of nothing, and having made man to thy own likeness, didst form woman from the side of man, to show that no separation should divide those who were made of one flesh; O God, who by so excellent a mystery didst consecrate the nuptial contract, making it a figure of the sacrament of Christ and thy church; O God, by whom woman is joined to man, and a blessing has been granted to marriage, which was not taken away either by the punishment of original sin or the waters of the Deluge; look down, we beseech thee, on this thy servant, who begs to be surrounded with thy protection. May the yoke of marriage be to her a yoke of peace and love; may she marry faithful and chaste in Christ; may she imitate the holy women who have gone before her. Let her be lovely as Rachel in the eyes of her husband; wise as Rebecca; long-lived and faithful as Sarah. May she remain true, obedient, and bound to one bed. May she flee all unlawful engagements, and by the power of discipline, strengthen her weakness. Make her fruitful in her offspring, reputable and virtuous in life. Grant that she may arrive at the rest of the saints, and the kingdom of heaven; that she may live to a good old age, and see the children of her children to the third and fourth generation, through Christ, our Lord. Amen."[1] At

[1] Martene, i. p. 52. The reader will have observed that there is no mention made of any contract of marriage at this ceremony. The presence of the parties soliciting and receiving the blessing of the church on their union, was taken for sufficient evidence of their mutual consent to the contract previously made at the betrothal. There is no trace of any form of marriage-contract in ancient sacramentaries previously to the close of the twelfth century; and the earliest mention of it occurs in the constitutions of two English prelates, Richard Poere, bishop of Sarum, and Richard de Marisco, bishop of Durham, who ordered the parish priest to teach the bridegroom this form—"I

the conclusion of this prayer the priest gave the pax to the bridegroom, who passed it with a kiss to the bride, and then both received the communion. On the third or fourth day they returned to the church, attended but did not communicate at the mass, and from that time lived together as man and wife.

III. If the Anglo-Saxon church was thus careful to invoke the grace of Heaven on the matrimonial union, she was not less liberal of her benedictions to the females who, preferring an immortal spouse, dedicated their virginity to God. "He that giveth his virgin in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage, doeth better," was the dictum of an inspired apostle;[1] and, in conformity with his doctrine, we meet in every country, for more than a thousand years after the first preaching of Christianity, with females who, to speak the language of our ancestors, had "wedded themselves to God," and "made themselves by vow the brides of Christ."[2] The consummation of their sacrifice was conducted with the most imposing solemnity. Monks and nuns might profess their obe-

take thee, N. for my wife;" and the bride a similar form,—"I take thee, N. for my husband."—Wilkins, Con. i. 582.

[1] 1 Cor. vii. 38.

[2] Đone þrýð-ġuman þe heo ær beþeddoð þær. þ ir Lpirt. Loðer þýrð biđ ġehaten.—(Thorpe, ii. 188.) Ꝑýnecýne þe Loðe ýlrum beþeddoð biđ to þrýðe.—(Ibid. p. 206.) Bona est castitas conjugalis, melior continentia vidualis, optima perfectio virginalis.—(Bed. Hom. xviii. p. 124.) The same doctrine is also that of the Saxon homilist: "These three states are agreeable to God, if men righteously live in them. Maidenhood is both in men and women. Those have right maidenhood who from childhood continue in chastity. They shall have from God a hundredfold meed in everlasting life. Widows are those who after the death of their husbands live in chastity for love of God; they shall have a sixtyfold meed from God for their tribulation. Those who rightly hold their marriage vow, shall have a thirtyfold meed for their reasonable conduct."—Ælfric's Homilies, i. p. 149.

dience to a particular monastic rule in the hands of the abbot or abbess; but the consecration of a virgin was considered of greater importance; it was exclusively reserved to the ministry of the bishop,[1] and attached to the principal festivals of the year; and at Easter, the Epiphany, and on the feasts of the apostles, in the presence of the people, before the altar, and at the feet of the chief pastor, the voluntary victim renounced the pleasures of the world, that she might obtain a future but immortal crown.[2] To check, however, the eagerness and indiscretion of youth, the votary was commanded to wait till the stability of her determination had been proved by experience; and, that she might not afterwards accuse her caprice or temerity, her solemn vow was retarded till she had reached her twenty-fifth year.[3] On the appointed day, the habit appropriated to her profession was blessed by the bishop. When he commenced the office of the mass, she dressed herself in a private room; and, at some period before the offertory, was introduced into the church, and led to the foot of the altar. Turning towards her, in a short address he explained the nature of the sacrifice which it was her intention to make, and admonished her of the obligations which it imposed. If she still persisted, he inquired whether her determination had been sanctioned with the consent of her parents; and, having received a satisfactory answer, placed his hands upon her head, and pronounced the prayer of consecration:[4]

[1] Mart. l. ii. c. vi. p. 186. Spicil. tom. ix. p. 54.
[2] Excerp. Egb. apud Wilk. p. 106, xcii. Thorpe, ii. p. 110.
[3] Id. ibid. xciii.
[4] Martene de Rit. l. ii. c. 6, p. 188.

"Be thou blessed by the Creator of heaven and earth, the Father, God omnipotent, who has chosen thee like the holy Mary, mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, to preserve pure and immaculate the virginity which thou hast promised before God and his holy angels. Persevere therefore in thy resolution; preserve thy chastity with patience; and keep thyself worthy to receive the crown of virginity."

"Be thou blessed with every spiritual blessing by God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, that thou mayest remain pure, chaste, and immaculate. May the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and piety, the spirit of the fear of the Lord rest upon thee. May he strengthen thy weakness, and confirm thy strength. May he govern all thy actions, purify thy thoughts, and enrich thee with every virtue. Have always before thine eyes him whom one day thou wilt have for thy judge. Make it thy care, that when thou shalt enter the chamber of thy spouse, he may meet thee with joy and kindness; that when the dreadful day shall come which is to reward the just and punish the wicked, the avenging flame may find nothing in thee to burn, but the divine mercy may find much to reward. Serve thy God with a pure heart, that thou mayest hereafter be associated to the one hundred and forty thousand virgins, who follow the Lamb, and sing a new canticle; and may *he* bless thee from heaven who vouchsafed to descend upon earth and redeem mankind by dying on a cross, Christ Jesus, our Lord."

The bishop then placed the consecrated veil on her head, with these words: "Receive, daughter, this cover-

ing, which thou mayest carry without stain before the tribunal of Christ, to whom bows every knee of things in heaven, on earth, and under the earth." As he finished, the church rang with the acclamations of the people, who cried, Amen. The mass was continued, she received the holy communion, and at the conclusion the bishop once more gave her his benediction: "Pour forth, O Lord, thy heavenly blessing on this thy servant, our sister, who has humbled herself under thy hand. AMEN. Cover her with thy protection. AMEN. May she avoid all sin, know the good things prepared for her, and seek the reward of thy heavenly kingdom. AMEN. May she obey thy commandments, by thy grace resist the impulse of passion, and bear in her hand the lamp of holiness. AMEN. May she deserve to enter the gates of the heavenly kingdom, in the company of the wise and chaste. AMEN. May *he* grant this, whose empire remains for eternity. AMEN. The blessing of God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, remain with thee here, and for ever. AMEN."[1]

In the Anglo-Saxon records we often meet with mention of females who had in this manner bound themselves by solemn vow to a life of virginity, and who generally appear to have belonged to the first families in the nation.[2] As the spouse to whom they

[1] This account is taken from the pontifical of Archbishop Egbert, transcribed by Martene, ibid. p. 116. It is described in nearly the same manner in the Anglo-Saxon pontifical which was preserved at Jumiege (Mart. p. 188). In the Durham ritual the prayers are rather different, but to the same purpose, and taken from the Leonine and Gelasian sacramentaries.—Rit. Dun. 103-6.

[2] In the Codex Diplomaticus are several grants of lands to such females, on condition that they pray for the donor. Thus Athelstan gives an estate at Overton cuidam sanctæ conversationi deditæ Christi

had been affianced could not die, the engagement which they had contracted was deemed irrevocable by the laws both of the church and the state. Any violation of chastity subjected the consecrated virgin to a course of penance during seven years;[1] if she presumed to marry, the marriage was declared invalid; and the parties were excommunicated, ordered to separate, and to do penance during the remainder of their lives.[2] Should they elude the execution of this regulation, another law deprived her of her dower after the death of her reputed husband, pronounced her children illegitimate, and rendered them incapable of inheriting the property of their parents.[3]

IV. Under the Mosaic dispensation, God himself had condescended to describe the various rites by which Aaron and his sons should be consecrated to his service; in the infancy of the Christian church, a more simple ceremony appears to have been taught by Christ to his apostles, and the dignity and graces of the priesthood were conferred by prayer and the imposition of hands.[4] While the number of the converts was small, a single minister was, in many places, sufficient to perform all the duties of religious worship; but with the increase of the faithful, and the influx of wealth, a more numerous and splendid establishment was adopted; and a regular gradation of office conducted the young ecclesiastic from the humble station of porter to the

ancillæ nomine Wulfswythe, eatenus ut ejus memoriam in suis sanctis orationibus indesinenter habeat (ii. 217). See also 227, 233, 239.

[1] Thorpe, ii. 77, 143.

[2] Id. ii. 188, 272. Conc. Calcuith. p. 149, xvi.

[3] Leg. Eccles. Ælfred. p. 192, vi. Thorpe, i. 66.

[4] 1 Tim. iii. 14.

more honourable rank of deacon, priest, or bishop. In each order his fidelity underwent a long probation; but his perseverance was rewarded with promotion; and at each step a new ordination reminded him of his additional duties, and invoked in his favour the benediction of Heaven. In the Anglo-Saxon church the clergy was constituted after the Roman model; and the hierarchy consisted of porters, lectors, exorcists, acolythists, sub-deacons, deacons, and priests. The seventh order (that of the priesthood) was subdivided into two classes,—of bishops, who possessed it in all its plenitude, and of priests, whose ministry was restricted to the exercise of those functions which, from their importance and frequent recurrence, demanded the assistance of numerous co-operators. "The bishop and the priest," says Ælfric, in his charge to the clergy, "both belong to the same order; but one is superior to the other. Besides the functions which are common to both, it is the office of the bishop to ordain, to confirm, to bless the holy oils, and to dedicate churches; for it would be too much if these powers had been communicated to all priests."[1]

In the choice and promotion of the inferior ministers, the judgment of the bishops was guided by the wisdom of preceding ages. Whatever regarded the time and rite of ordination, the age, personal merit, and mental endowments of the candidates, had been

[1] Ælfric. ep. ad Wulfsin. inter Leg. Sax. p. 155. Ep. ad Wolstan. p. 167. The distinction between bishops and priests is thus drawn in the Anglo-Saxon pontifical:—Presbyterum oportet benedicere, offerre, et bene præesse, prædicare et baptizare, atque communicare. Episcopum oportet judicare et interpretari, consecrare et consummare, quin et ordinare, offerre, et baptizare: omnia debet prospicere et ordinare. —Pont. Egb. p. 346. Pont. Gemet. p. 356, 357.

foreseen and determined by the decrees of councils and the usage of antiquity. The time was fixed to the four Ember weeks, which regularly returned with the four seasons of the year; and on the evening of the Saturday the bishop commenced the sacred ceremony, the length of which frequently encroached on the following morning.[1] The lower orders, which imposed no irrevocable obligation, might be lawfully conferred even on children: for the others a greater maturity of age and judgment was required; and the deacon was expected to have reached his twenty-fifth, the priest his thirtieth year, the time of life at which Christ was believed to have commenced his evangelical labours.[2] But this regulation was not strictly enforced: and a proper latitude was granted to the discretion of the bishop, who might lawfully dispense in favour of superior merit, or the wants of a numerous people.[3] A severe scrutiny preceded admission to the higher degrees of the hierarchy.[4] A competency of learning, and the reputation of virtue, were necessary qualifications. Idolatry, witchcraft, murder, fornication, perjury, and theft, though time and repentance might be supposed to have obliterated the former scandal, opposed insuperable impediments to the pretensions of the candidate; and if he succeeded in concealing these crimes at the time of his ordination, yet, from the

[1] Pont. Egb. l. i. c. viii. p. 33. Wilk. Con. p. 107, xcix.

[2] Wilk. pp. 106, xciii.; 107, xcvii. Fifty years was the age which the canons required for a bishop, according to St. Boniface: but this regulation was seldom observed.—Vit. St. Bonif. apud Serrar. p. 267.

[3] Ep. Zach. ad Bonif. p. 214. Thus Beda was ordained deacon at nineteen (l. v. c. 24): the abbot Esterwin received priest's orders at twenty-nine, Ceolfrith at twenty-seven.—Bed. Hist. Abbat. pp. 296, 302.

[4] Wilk. pp. 95, 147.

moment that they became known, he was deposed from his rank, and condemned to fast and pray in the number of public penitents.[1] It was also required, that he were free from every stain which might depreciate him in the estimation of the public,—deformity of body, illegitimacy of birth, and servile descent; and if he had been married, he was compelled to prove that his wife was already dead, or had voluntarily embraced a life of perpetual continency.[2] To these was added a third requisite, which showed the high importance attached to clerical chastity. A second marriage was deemed to imply a weakness of mind, and a secret propensity to pleasure, incompatible with the austerity of the Levitical or sacerdotal character: and the bigamist, though he were a widower, and possessed of every other qualification, was excluded, without the hope of indulgence, from the rank of bishop, priest, or deacon.[3]

In the Anglo-Saxon pontificals are accurately described the various rites by which the ministers of the church were invested with their respective dignities. The collation of the inferior orders I shall neglect, as of inferior importance:[4] that of the higher may be compressed within the compass of a few pages, and will not, perhaps, appear uninteresting to the pious or the curious reader.

1. The candidates for orders were admonished to repair to the residence of the bishop a month before the time fixed for ordination, that he personally, or with

[1] Wilk. p. 85. Ep. Zach. ad Bonif. p. 215.
[2] Id. ibid.
[3] Id. ibid. p. 103, xxxii. Pontif. Egb. p. 35.
[4] It differed very little from the form in the present Roman pontifical, and may be seen in Martene, p. 33.

the aid of the archdeacon, might ascertain how far they were qualified for the office to which they aspired, by inquiring into their proficiency in that theological knowledge which it would be their duty to impart to others, and their acquaintance "with the meaning of the mass, and of the other church services," which they would be called upon to perform.[1] At the appointed hour the archdeacon introduced those who had passed this examination with credit, to the bishop in the church, and to a question from that prelate replied, that he bore, as far as human frailty might presume, a willing testimony to their merit and capacity. The bishop then addressed the congregation. He requested the assistance of their prayers for the important function which it was his duty to perform; but exhorted them not to permit the sanctity of the hierarchy to be polluted by the adoption of improper characters; and commanded them, if they were acquainted with a canonical impediment in any of the candidates, to step forward, and declare it with modesty and freedom. If no accusation was preferred, he lay, while the Litany was chanted, prostrate at the foot of the altar; and the clerks who were to be ordained ranged themselves in the same posture behind him. Rising, he first conferred the degree of deacon, with the following ceremonies. Having placed the stole across the left shoulder of each candidate, as they successively knelt before him, he put into his hand the book of the gospels, saying, "Receive this volume of the gospel; read and understand it; teach it to others, and fulfil

[1] Bib. Bodl. MSS. Jun. 121, quoted by Mr. Soames, Hist. 260.

it thyself." Then holding his hands over all their heads, he thus continued :—" O Lord God Almighty, the giver of honours, distributor of rank, and disposer of functions, look with complacency on these thy servants, whom we humbly ordain to the office of deacon, that they may always minister in thy service. We, though ignorant of thy judgment, have examined their lives, as far as we are able. But thou, O Lord, knowest all things; the most hidden things are not concealed from thine eyes. Thou art acquainted with all secrets, thou art the searcher of hearts. But as thou canst examine their conduct by thy celestial light, so canst thou also purify their souls, and grant them the graces necessary for their functions. Send, therefore, on them, O Lord, thy Holy Spirit, that, in the execution of their ministry, they may be strengthened by the seven-fold gift of thy grace. May thy precepts shine in their conduct; may thy people learn to imitate the chastity of their lives; and may their fidelity in their present station raise them to a higher dignity in thy church." He then completed the ordination by anointing their hands with oil and chrism, praying, " that through the merits of Christ, whatever they should bless might be blessed, and whatever they should hallow might be hallowed."[1]

2. After the ordination of the deacons, followed that of the priests. The preparatory ceremonies were the same; but the stole, which before had been placed on the left shoulder, now hung over the neck, and was permitted to fall down before the breast. The bishop then pronounced aloud the name of the church for which

[1] Martene, Pontif. Egb. p. 35. Pont. Gemet. p. 39.

each candidate was to be ordained, and holding his hands over their heads, in which he was imitated by the assistant priests, read or chanted the prayer of consecration. He began by observing, that as Moses in the desert had chosen seventy rulers to assist him in governing the people; as Eleazer and Ithamar were selected to participate with their father Aaron in the functions of the sacred ministry; as the apostles had employed the zeal of their most virtuous disciples in the conversion of nations; so he, their unworthy successor, required the aid of numerous and faithful co-operators. "Give, therefore," he continued, "we beseech thee, Almighty Father, to these thy servants, the dignity of the priesthood; renew in their bowels the spirit of holiness; make them the zealous assistants of our order, and grant to them the form of all righteousness." Here he interrupted his prayer, and requested the congregation to join with him in soliciting the blessing of Heaven on those who had been chosen to labour for their salvation. He then resumed the consecration in the following words:—"O God, the author of all sanctity, impose the hand of thy benediction on these thy servants, whom we ordain to the honour of the priesthood. Instructed by the lessons which Paul gave to Timothy and Titus, may they meditate day and night on thy law: may they believe what they read, teach what they believe, and practise what they teach. May their conduct be an example of all virtue, that they may preserve pure and unsullied the gift of thy ministry, may for the worship of thy people transform by an immaculate benediction bread and wine into the body and blood of thy Son; and

growing to the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ, may appear at the day of judgment, with a pure conscience, a perfect faith, and the plenitude of the Holy Spirit." He then clothed them with the chasuble, the garment appropriated to the priests, blessed their hands, "that they might consecrate the sacrifices which were offered for the sins of the people;" and anointed their heads, praying that "they might be hallowed with the celestial blessing in the order of priesthood, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."[1] The latter ceremony seems, originally, to have been peculiar to the Anglo-Saxons: from them it passed to a few churches in Gaul; but was at last abolished through the opposition of the bishops, who were unwilling that the priests should be honoured with a rite, which the Roman Church had exclusively attached to the episcopal consecration.[2]

[1] Mart. ibid. pp. 36, 39.

[2] The delivery of the gospel to the deacons, and the unction of their hands, were also ceremonies peculiar to the Anglo-Saxons, though both the pontificals profess to derive the rites of ordination from the customs of Rome.—(Mart. pp. 22, 23.) The first of these is now found in the Roman pontifical.—I may here notice, that according to a canon of the council of Calcuith in 816, no "Scot [Irishman] was to be permitted to usurp the sacred office in any diocese, or to administer the sacraments, because it was not known by whom such strangers had been ordained, nor whether they had been ordained at all. The canons forbade any man to intrude into the parish of another without his consent, and it was still more objectionable to accept the ministrations of persons from foreign nations, cum quibus nullus ordo metropolitanis, nec honoraliis habeatur."—(Spel. Con. 329.) This has been taken as a proof that the Anglo-Saxons denied the validity of ordinations by the Scottish bishops; which is contrary to the whole tenor of their history. The last line is evidently an incorrect reading, from which no conclusion can be drawn; but the preceding portion of the canon shows, that it was the object of the council to check the presumption of strangers unknown, who, travelling through the country, took upon themselves to perform the priestly office under pretence that they had received ordination in Ireland.

3. In a preceding chapter has been described the gradual transition of the privilege of nominating bishops from the suffrages of the clergy and people, to the more venal and interested choice of the prince. Still a shadow of the ancient discipline was respectfully preserved: from the pulpit of the cathedral the name of the clergyman who had been nominated to the vacant see was announced to the congregation;[1] and their acclamations of "Many years may he live, may he be pleasing to God, may he be dear to men," were assumed as sufficient evidence of their assent.[2] A public instrument of his election was composed, and confided to a deputation of the chapter, who presented it to the metropolitan, and solicited him to consecrate the object of their choice.[3] He appointed the day for the performance of the ceremony. But previously the bishop elect appeared before him, answered certain interrogatories, and subscribed a declaration of faith and profession of obedience.[4] He then retired to the

[1] Angl. Sac. vol. ii. pp. 107, 198.

[2] Vivat, clamitant, episcopus annis innumeris, vivat Deo gratus, vivat hominibus charus.—Vit. St. Elpheg. Ang. Sac. p. 127.

[3] Ang. Sac. vol. ii. p. 107. A copy of this instrument may be seen in the same work, vol. i. p. 82. Harpsfield has published that which was presented for the ordination of Ælfric (Hist. p. 198). It is expressed in the same words as the former.

[4] The interrogations to be answered, and the profession of faith, with the promise of obedience, may be seen in ancient copies of the Gregorian sacramentary. That this part of the Roman ceremonial was also observed in England, is plain from the following description of it by Eadulf, bishop of Sidnacester, a little before the year 800. Episcopi, quisquis ille est, fides primum discutienda est, si de Domino bene ipse sentiat, quod aliis prædicare conatur; ac sic paulatim quæritur, si docibilis, si moribus temperatus, si sobrius, si vita castus, si humilis, si affabilis, si misericors, si literatus, si in lege Domini instructus, si in Scripturarum sensibus cautus, si in dogmatibus ecclesiasticis exercitatus.—(Ang. Sac. i. 78.) Berhtred, his successor, about 850, in his profession to Archbishop Ceolnoth, is in some respects more minute—

church, and passed the night before the altar, sometimes employed in private prayer, at others reciting or chanting the office with his chaplains.

A single bishop, attended by his priests, might ordain the inferior ministers; the presence of at least three prelates was required at the consecration of a bishop. From this obligation Gregory the Great had exempted St. Augustine, and permitted him to perform the ceremony without any assistants; but he added that this indulgence was to expire with the circumstances which rendered it necessary, and that the ancient discipline was then to be strictly observed.[1] The consecration was performed in the church, and during the mass. At the appointed time the bishop elect placed himself on his knees before the prelates who had assembled for the occasion. Two of them held the book of the gospels on the crown of his head; the others touched it with their hands, and the metropolitan pronounced the form of consecration. Having observed that the consecration of Aaron was a type of that of the bishops in the

Orthodoxam, catholicam, apostolicam fidem profiteor. Suscipio etiam decreta pontificum, et sex synodos catholicas sanctorum et antiquorum virorum, et præfixam ab eis fidem et regulam sincera devotione conservo . . . . omnium Dei sacerdotum et ecclesiarum sancta decreta, canonum catholicorum, et definitionem priorum modernorumque pontificum consentiens subscripsi.—(Ibid. 79.) These passages show that a declaration of adhesion to the six general councils, and to the decrees of the popes, was much more ancient than many writers are willing to admit. It is, indeed, true, that into this part of the ceremonial new questions were occasionally introduced, and new declarations from the bishop elect were required; not however, as some suggest, because the church had changed its belief, but in defence of ancient doctrines and practices, which innovators had begun to impugn. To ascertain the belief of the new prelate on particular points, respecting which there was no dispute, was unnecessary. It was included in the general declaration that he believed as the Catholic church believed.

[1] Bed. Hist. l. i. c. 27.

new law, he prayed that God would grant to his servant the virtues prefigured by the habit appropriated to the high priest in the Jewish temple:[1] that he would impart to him the plenitude of the holy ministry, and give to him the keys of the kingdom of heaven: that whatever he should bind or loose on earth might be bound or loosed in heaven; that whose sins he should retain they might be retained; and whose sins he should forgive they might be forgiven; that he might never give to evil the appellation of good, nor to good the appellation of evil; that he might receive an episcopal chair to rule the church, that God might be his strength and authority, and that his prayer might be heard as often as he implored the mercy of the Almighty.[2] His hands and head were then anointed with oil; the crosier was delivered into his hand, and the ring put on his finger. Each ceremony was accompanied with a prayer expressive of its meaning; and at the conclusion he was placed on the episcopal throne, with these words: "O Lord Jesus Christ, who didst choose thine apostles to be our masters, vouchsafe to

[1] In this part of the prayer, the following passage, according to the Anglo-Saxon pontificals, was inserted at the ordination of the Roman pontiff. Idcirco hunc famulum tuum, ill. quem apostolicæ sedis præsulem et primatem omnium, qui in orbe sunt, sacerdotum, ac universalis ecclesiæ tuæ doctorem dedisti, et ad summi sacerdotii ministerium elegisti, &c.—(Pont. Egb. p. 32. Pont. Gemet. p. 41.) In the latter pontifical is added the prayer at the delivery of the pallium to the archbishops of Canterbury and York.—Ibid.

[2] As the book of the gospels was now raised from his head, it was customary for the metropolitan to open it, at hazard, and to read the first line in the page, which line was looked upon as predictive of the future conduct or fortune of the new bishop. Numerous examples occur after the Conquest; I recollect but one before it, in the life of St. Wulstan.—Ang. Sac. vol. ii. p. 252.

teach, instruct, and bless this thy bishop, that he may lead a holy and immaculate life. Amen."[1]

V. The inauguration of princes was originally a civil rite. The emperors of the Romans, and the kings of the barbarians, were alike elevated on a shield, and saluted by the acclamations of the army. But when they had embraced the knowledge of the gospel, they deemed the examples recorded in the Jewish scriptures worthy of their imitation. Even the splendour of royalty might receive addition from the ceremonies of religion; and an anointed king would appear with still greater majesty in the eyes of his subjects. Theodosius the younger was the first who is recorded to have solicited the royal insignia from the ministers of the church; but his successors appreciated the policy of his conduct, and were careful to receive, with the imperial crown, the benediction of the Byzantine patriarch. In Britain this ceremony was imitated at an early period. No sooner had the emperor Honorius recalled the legions from the island, than the descendants of the ancient kings assumed the sceptre; and their inauguration, as we learn from a native writer, was performed with the regal unction.[2] From Britain it seems to have been transmitted to the Christian princes of Ireland: for the book of the *ordination* of kings was in the library of the abbot St. Columba; and according to its directions he blessed and *ordained* Aidan king of the Scots.[3] It

[1] Pont. Egb. p. 32.

[2] Ungebantur reges, says Gildas, et paulo post ab unctoribus trucidabantur.—Gild. p. 82 edit. Bertram, p. 27 edit. Stevenson.

[3] From Cumineus, who wrote in 607, and Adomnan, who wrote thirty years later, we learn that Columba ordained Aidan king according to the book of the ordination of kings, and blessed him, putting his hand on the king's head.—Vit. 59, Scot. pp. 30, 161.

has been said that the Anglo-Saxons were indebted for this rite to the policy of a usurper, Eardulf, of Northumbria;[1] but the ceremony of the coronation occupied a distinguished place in the pontifical of Archbishop Egbert, which was written many years before the reign of that prince.[2]

The ceremony began with the coronation oath. Its origin may be traced to Anthemius, the patriarch of Constantinople, whose zeal refused to place the crown on the head of Anastasius, a prince of suspicious orthodoxy, till he had sworn to make no innovation in the established religion. But the oath of the Anglo-Saxons was more comprehensive; it was a species of compact between the monarch and the people, which the bishop, as the representative of Heaven, ratified with his benediction. "In the name of the Holy Trinity," said the king, "I promise three things to Christian folk and my subjects. The first is, that God's church and all Christian folk of my realm shall hold true peace; the second, that I will prohibit rapine and every sort of injustice to men of all ranks; and the third, that I promise and will command justice with mercy to be observed in all judgments, that the gracious and merciful God may of his everlasting mercy forgive us all, who liveth and reigneth, world without end." This oath the king pronounced from a

[1] Carte, Hist. vol. i. p. 293. See note (B).

[2] This is the most ancient ordo ad benedicendum regem which is known. From a MS. in the Cotton library, Mr. Turner has translated the description of the ceremony, as it was performed at the coronation of Ethelred, in 978.—(Turner, vol. iii. 172.) It is different from that contained in the pontifical of Egbert, but the same with that published by Martene.

written copy, which he then laid for a memorial on the altar.[1]

A portion of the gospel was now read; three prayers to implore the blessing of God were recited; and the consecrated oil was poured on the head of the king. Whilst the other prelates anointed him, the archbishop chanted the collect—"O God, the strength of the elect and the exaltation of the humble, who by the unction of oil didst sanctify thy servant Aaron, and by the same didst prepare priests, kings, and prophets, to rule thy people Israel; sanctify, Almighty God, in like manner this thy servant, that like them he may be able to govern the people committed to his charge."

At the conclusion of the prayer, the principal thanes approached, and, in conjunction with the bishops, placed the sceptre in his hand. The archbishop continued:

[1] The above is a literal version of the oath, in the Anglo-Saxon language, which is believed to have been put by Archbishop Dunstan into the hands of King Ethelred at his coronation at Kingston, in 978, with an admonition that he should give no other pledge whatsoever.—(Reliq. Antiq. ii. 194, Hickes, Gram. præf.) That oath was a translation from the Latin oath, which is still preserved in the coronation service, said to have been used on that occasion:—Hæc tria populo Christiano et mihi subdito in Christi promitto nomine: In primis, ut ecclesia Dei et omnis populus Christianus veram pacem nostro arbitrio in omni tempore servet; aliud, ut rapacitates et omnes iniquitates omnibus gradibus interdicam; et ut in omnibus judiciis equitatem et misericordiam præcipiam, ut mihi et vobis indulgeat suam misericordiam clemens et misericors Deus, qui vivit et regnat, &c.—(Cott. MS. Claud. A. iii.) But the substance is much more ancient, as appears from the pontifical of Archbishop Egbert: "Rectitudo est regis noviter ordinati, et in solium sublevati, hæc tria præcepta populo Christiano sibi subdito præcipere: In primis ut ecclesia Dei et omnis populus Christianus veram pacem servent in omni tempore. Amen. Aliud est, ut rapacitates et omnes iniquitates omnibus gradibus interdicat. Amen. Tertium est, ut in omnibus judiciis æquitatem et misericordiam præcipiat, ut per hoc nobis indulgeat misercordiam suam clemens et misericors Deus. Amen."—(Mart. l. ii. p. 188.) The same oath occurs in the ancient French pontificals.—Ibid. pp. 197, 199, 211.

"Bless, O Lord, this prince, thou who rulest the kingdoms of all kings. AMEN."

"May he always be subject to thee with fear; may he serve thee; may his reign be peaceful; may he with his chieftains be protected by thy shield; may he be victorious without bloodshed. AMEN."

"May he live magnanimous among the assemblies of the nations; may he be distinguished by the equity of his judgments. AMEN."

"Grant him length of life for years; and may justice arise in his days. AMEN."

"Grant that the nations may be faithful to him; and his nobles may enjoy peace and love charity. AMEN."

"Be thou his honour, his joy, and his pleasure; his solace in grief, his counsel in difficulty, his consoler in labour. AMEN."

"May he seek advice from thee, and by thee may he learn to hold the reins of empire; that his life may be a life of happiness, and he may hereafter enjoy eternal bliss. AMEN."

The rod was now put into his hand, with a prayer that the benedictions of the ancient patriarchs, of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, might rest upon him. He was then crowned, and the archbishop said, "Bless, O Lord, the strength of the king our prince, and receive the work of his hands. Blessed by thee be his land, with the precious dew of the heavens, and the springs of the low-lying deep; with the fruits brought forth by the sun, and the fruits brought forth by the moon; with the precious things of the aged mountains, and the precious things of the eternal hills, with the fruits of the

earth and the fulness thereof. May the blessing of him who appeared in the bush rest on the head of the king. May he be blessed in his children, and dip his foot in oil. May the horns of the rhinoceros be his horns; with them may he push the nations to the extremities of the earth. And be he, who rideth on the heavens, his helper for ever."[1] Here the people exclaimed thrice, "Live the king for ever. AMEN. AMEN. AMEN." They were then admitted to kiss him on his throne. The ceremony concluded with this prayer: "O God, the author of eternity, leader of the heavenly host, and conqueror of all enemies, bless this thy servant, who humbly bends his head before thee. Pour thy grace upon him; preserve him with health and happiness in the office to which he is appointed, and wherever and for whomsoever he shall implore thy assistance, do thou, O God, be present, protect and defend him, through Christ our Lord. AMEN."[2]

[1] These benedictions are selected from Deuteronomy xxxiii.

[2] Pontif. Egb. p. 186.—There is nothing in this ceremony to countenance the notion of Sir Ed. Coke (Reports, part v.)—a notion inconsistent with the whole tenor of the Anglo-Saxon history (see chap. iii. of this work),—that the king was head of the church as well as of the state. "Kings," says Wihtræd, king of Kent, "shall appoint earls, ealdormen, shire-reeves, and doomsmen; but the archbishop shall instruct and govern God's church,"—Lıngaſ ꝛcealon ꝛettan eoplaſ ȝ ealdopmen· ꝛcıꝑu-ꝑeꝛan· ȝ bomeꝛmen· ȝ apcebıſcop ꝛceal Lopeſ ȝelabunȝe ꝑıꝛꝛıan ȝ ꝑæban.—(Wilk. Con. p. 57.) If the king is sometimes called God's vicar or vicegerent, that term is explained to mean that it is his duty to provide for the common safety of all, and therefore protect the church within his dominions. It is very rightly the duty of a Christian king to be in the place of a father to a Christian nation, and, both in watch and ward, the vicegerent of Christ—on papa ȝ on ꝛeapbe Lꝛıꝛtep ȝeꝛpelıȝa.—"It is his duty everywhere to protect God's church."—(Thorpe, ii. 304.) We meet, indeed, in the collections of laws, with certain regulations called the ecclesiastical dooms of Edmund, and Edgar, and Ethelbert, and Canute. But these regard not doctrine nor worship,—canons on such subjects are always published by the archbishop and subscribed by him and the bishops,—but

Among other nations of Teutonic origin it was customary to honour the queen-consort with the ceremony of coronation; but it is a question whether any Anglo-Saxon queen was ever crowned before Judith, the wife of King Ethelwulf, and daughter of Charles le Chauve, King of France. In 856, Ethelwulf in his return from Rome was affianced to Judith in the month of July, and married to her on the nones of October, by Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims. During the mass, immediately before the gospel, that prelate put the ring on her finger, to remind her that she was now wedded to the kingdom,[1] anointed her on the head, and perhaps on the breast,[2] and then placed a crown on her head, praying that God would grant to her honour and glory in this world, and the crown of heavenly bliss in the

matters of a mixed nature, on which the bishops had invoked the aid of the civil power; as the payment of the tithes and church dues, bots for the invasion of ecclesiastical privileges, penalties for the breach of the canons, or of the observance of fasts and festivals, and similar matters. It was found impossible, among a rude and turbulent people, to enforce ecclesiastical ordinances by spiritual authority alone. Though episcopal synods were frequently held,—as that of London, by St. Augustine (Epist. S. Bonif. 132, p. 185); of Hertford, in 673, and of Hatfield, in 680, by Theodore; of Cloveshoe, in 747, by Cuthbert; of Calcuith, in 816, by Wulfred,—yet at the same time the aid of the civil power was often solicited, as appears from the laws of Ine of Wessex, and of Wihtræd of Kent, and from that time down to the Conquest. The language of these documents shows that the ordinances of the bishops were published by the Witan as national dooms, but apart from, and before the other enactments. "These," says the council at Enham, "are the ordinances which the councillors of the English have selected and decreed, and strictly enjoined that they be observed. And this, then, is first, the primary ordinance of the bishops,—that we all diligently turn from sin, and diligently confess our misdeeds, and strictly do penance, and rightly love and worship one God," &c.—Thorpe, i. 314.

[1] Annulo pro integritate fidei.—Ancient rubric in Selden, Titles of Honour, p. 152.

[2] I say "perhaps," because in the most ancient English rubric the head only is mentioned. In the French form the breast is added.

world to come.[1] The ceremony was plainly an abridgement of the coronation service for a king, and was probably adopted as an expedient to content her parents, who were aware that, according to the custom of the country, she would not be crowned in England. Judith was at that time a mere girl; she could not have passed her thirteenth year; but on her arrival was treated with all the respect due to a queen. As long as Ethelwulf lived, which was little more than a year, she always sat by his side on occasions of state, wearing her crown upon her head. To the West-Saxons it was an unusual sight; for we are told that, to prove their detestation of the conduct of Eadburge, the daughter of Offa, and consort of King Beorhtric, they refused to pay any distinctive mark of respect to the wives of their sovereigns. But in the case of Judith, they submitted without a murmur to the will of the king, probably because she was an anointed queen.[2]

[1] See Hincmar's Works, p. 750.

[2] Asser, pp. 9—11. It is some confirmation of the story told by Asser, that while, from the reign of Offa to the extinction of the Mercian monarchy, we have many undisputed charters subscribed by the consorts of the kings of Mercia with the title of regina, there is not one in which any consort of a king of Wessex does the like during the same period. The most early instance in which that title is given to a wife of the king of Wessex, in any contemporary document, occurs, if I mistake not, in the reign of Edmund (anno 945), when Ethelgive, making her will, declares her intentions to her lord the king, and her lady the queen, and bequeaths to her lady the queen thirty mancuses of gold, and her land at Westwick—Ego Æthelgive aperio domino meo regi, et reginæ dominæ meæ, et omnibus amicis meis, quomodo testamentum meum dispono.—(Cod. Dipl. ii. 266.) After this the word regina becomes more common in Latin instruments to denote the king's consort; but we generally meet in Anglo-Saxon writings with the term "*the* lady," as, "I Ælgyfe, the Lady." Wulfstan greets Cnut the king his lord, and Ælgyfe the Lady.—It has been supposed that queens were crowned, because in some MSS. the order for the coronation of a queen follows that for the coronation of a king: but this proves only that both orders were contained in the original from which the copy was made.

VI. Of the manner in which the first Christian oratories were consecrated to the service of God we are ignorant. The offices of religion were carefully concealed from the notice of the profane, and the converts were too prudent to alarm the jealousy or provoke the avarice of the infidels by an unnecessary splendour. But as soon as the sceptre had been placed in the hands of Constantine, religious edifices of considerable magnificence rose in every province, and the Christian emperor aspired to equal the fame of David and Solomon. The dedication of the temple of Jerusalem served as a model for the dedication of the Christian churches, the bishops eagerly assembled to perform the sacred ceremony, and their ministry was joyfully attended by the presence of the great, and the acclamations of the people.[1] Succeeding generations preserved with fidelity the practice of their predecessors; and among the Anglo-Saxons no solemnity was celebrated with more imposing pomp than the dedication of a church. Egfrid, king of Northumbria, his brother Ælwin, their caldormen and abbots, attended St. Wilfrid, when he consecrated the *basilic* which he had erected at Ripon;[2] to the dedication of the church at Ramsey, all the thanes of the six neighbouring counties were invited by St. Oswald;[3] and when the same ceremony was performed in the cathedral of Winchester, after its restoration by St. Ethelwold, it was honoured with

[1] For the East, see Eusebius (Hist. x. c. 3, and his Life of Constantine, iv. c. 40, 43-6); for the West, St. Ambrose (Ep. 54, ad Marcellinam sororem), and St. Paulinus (Ep. 11, 12, &c. in Bib. Pat.). See note (C).

[2] Edd. Vit. St. Wilf. c. xvii.

[3] Hist. Ram. p. 422.

the presence of king Ethelred and his court, and of the metropolitan and eight other bishops.[1]

The night preceding the ceremony was spent in watching and prayer. On the morning the prelates, dressed in their pontificals, repaired to the porch of the church, and the principal consecrator struck the door thrice with his crosier, repeating the verse, "Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates, and the King of glory shall enter in." At the third stroke it was opened, the choir sung the twenty-fourth psalm, and the bishops entered, proclaiming, "Peace to this house, and to all who dwell therein: peace to those who enter, peace to those who go out."[2] They proceeded to the foot of the principal altar, and lay prostrate before it, while the Litany was sung.[3] At its conclusion they arose, and one of the bishops with the end of his crosier wrote two Roman alphabets on the floor in the form of a cross. He then sprinkled the altar, the walls, and the pavement with water that had been blessed, and, standing in the middle of the church, chanted the following prayer:—"O blessed and holy Trinity, who purifiest, cleansest, and adornest all things; O blessed Majesty of God, who

[1] Wolst. Carmen in Act. SS. Bened. sæc. v. p. 629.

[2] Wolstan, in his poem on the dedication of the cathedral of Winchester, has contrived to shape these words into the form of Latin verse, and hitch them into Leonine rhymes:

Incipiunt omnes modulata voce canentes,
Pax sit huic domui, pax sit et hic fidei.
Pax fiat intranti, pax et fiat egredienti;
Semper in hocque loco, laus sit honorque Deo.

Wolst. ibid. p. 632.

[3] The litany was very short. There was no mention in it of the Father or the Holy Ghost, but all the petitions were addressed to Christ.—Martene, ii. 247.

fillest, governest, and disposest all things; O blessed and holy hand of God, who sanctifiest, blessest, and enrichest all things; O God, the holy of holies, we humbly implore thy clemency, that by our ministry thou wouldst purify, bless, and consecrate this church to the honour of the holy and victorious cross, and the memory of thy blessed servant N. Here may thy priests offer to thee sacrifices of praise; here may thy faithful people perform their vows; here may the burden of sins be lightened, and those who have fallen be restored to grace. Grant that all who shall enter this temple to pray may obtain the effect of their petition, and rejoice for ever in the bounty of thy mercy. Amen." [1]

The principal object within the church was the altar, destined to be thenceforth "the seat of the heavenly sacrifice." This was consecrated by the bishop with a succession of prayers, in which he begged that God would prepare it for the celebration of the most sacred mysteries; that he would "accept the adorable victim that would lie there, and would grant eternal life to all who should partake of that victim;" that he would "transmute by his invisible power the elements selected for the sacrifice into the body and blood of the Redeemer, and cause the nature of the offering to pass into the substance of the Word, that what before was bread for the support of human life, might here become life everlasting." [2] He then anointed in the form of a

[1] Pont. Egb. 252. Gemet. 262.

[2] Gage, Ordo ad Dedic. Ecc. 24—27. Martene, l. ii. c. xiii. p. 251. Quod electas ad sacrificium creaturas in corpus et sanguinem Redemptoris virtus secreta convertat, et in sacras Agni hostias invisibili mutatione transcribat, ut sicut Verbum caro factum est, ita in verbi substantiam benedicta oblationis natura proficiat, et quod prius victui fuerat alimonia, vita hic efficiatur æterna.—Ibid.

cross the slab which was to form the cover of the altar, in the middle and at the four corners, and subsequently the walls of the church at certain intervals. The furniture of the altar was then placed before him, and he consecrated the linen cloth with which it was to be covered, the vestments of the ministers who should officiate, the corporale or piece of linen "on which was consecrated, and with which was covered, the body and blood of Christ,"[1] the patene or dish, the chalice, and the eucharistial, or "new sepulchre of the body of Christ," in which was reserved the eucharist under the form of bread, as the viaticum for the dying.[2] Several other benedictions followed, of the cross, the censer, the bells, the baptistery (generally a distinct building which included the font), and last of all the adjoining cemetery.[3]

It was the custom in the first ages of Christianity to offer sacrifice upon the tombs of the martyrs;[4] after the conversion of Constantine the bishops were unwilling to depart from a practice consecrated in their eyes by the sanction of their predecessors, and either built new churches over the former tombs, or removed the contents of the tombs to the new churches.[5] Hence

[1] In usum altaris tui, ad consecrandum super ea, sive ad tegendum involvendumque corpus et sanguinem Filii tui, Domini nostri Jesu Christi.—Ordo ad Ded. p. 29. Martene, 252.

[2] Ut per nostram benedictionem hoc vasculum corporis Christi novum sepulchrum Spiritus sancti gratia sanctificetur.—Martene, 257.

[3] Ordo ad Ded. 32, 37. It should be observed that, when several bishops were present, different parts of this service were taken by them, and performed at the same time.

[4] Euseb. l. iv. c. 15. St. Cyril. contra Julian. 327, 334.

[5] Succedant victimæ triumphales in locum ubi Christus hostia est; sed ille super altare qui pro omnibus passus est: isti sub altari, qui illius redempti sunt passione.—S. Ambr. ad Marcellin. Sor. Epist. 22.

it became a general rule to require relicts of the saints for the rite of consecration, and the bishops of later ages, as churches multiplied, were often compelled to content themselves with a handful of dust from the tomb, or a small portion of the bones, or some memorial of the saint, in lieu of the entire body.[1] When such relics had been prepared, they were brought in procession to the church, after the preceding benediction. At the porch the bishop stopped, announced to the people the name of the saint in whose honour the church would be dedicated, and ordered the charter of endowment to be read. He proceeded to the altar, and a curtain was drawn between him and the spectators. A chest of oak or stone, called sometimes the confession,[2] sometimes the sepulchre, had been prepared; in it he deposited three portions of the eucharist,[3] together with the relics; the slab was then placed over it, and the masonry of the altar, if it were built of stone, hastily completed. In conclusion, he pronounced the prayer of dedication,[4] a solemn mass and communion followed,

[1] Many instances may be seen in the works of St. Paulinus, and others. See Martene, 242. Gerbert, 521.

[2] It was called the confession or *μαρτύριον*, from a name originally given to the tombs of the martyrs, because they had borne testimony in favour of Christ.

[3] We are told by the council of Calcuith under Archbishop Wulfred, that the eucharist was sufficient when relics could not be procured, because it was the body and blood of Christ. Et si alias reliquias intimare non potest, tamen hoc proficere maxime potest, quia corpus et sanguis est Domini nostri Jesu Christi.—(Wilk. Con. i. 169.) May not St. Chrysostom allude to this custom when he says, *Θαυμαστὸν τοῦτο πάλιν, ὅτι λίθος μὲν ἐστὶ τὴν φύσιν· ἅγιον δὲ γίνεται, ἐπειδὰν σῶμα δέχεται Χριστοῦ* (Hom. xx. in 2 Cor.); and St. Paulinius, who writes thus to Severus, Sufficit et illa ad basilicæ consecrationem gratia; scilicet, Dominus cum apostolis et martyribus, quorum venerandi cinis subjicitur altaribus?—Ep. xxxii. col. 201.

[4] It runs in the following form: "Tibi, sancta Dei genetrix virgo Maria (vel, Tibi sancte Joannes baptista Domini, vel apostole Dei, vel

and the more distinguished visitors repaired to the episcopal residence, and partook of a plentiful and splendid banquet.[1]

The object for which the charter of endowment was read to the people from the porch, was that the publicity thus given to the instrument might deter the heirs of the founder from reclaiming afterwards the lands which he had bestowed on the church. With this view, at the dedication of the church of Ripon, St. Wilfrid read from the altar a schedule of all the lands belonging to the abbey, and called on the assembly to bear witness to the legality of the titles.[2] At Ramsey, the ealdorman Alwin, the founder of the monastery, assembled at an early hour the thanes of the neighbouring counties, read to them the charters of King Edgar

martyres Christi, vel confessores Domini), tibi commendamus hanc curam templi hujus, quod consecravimus Domino Deo nostro, ut hic intercessor existas ; preces et vota offerentium hic Domino Deo offeras ; odoramenta orationum plebis Christianæ in libatorio vasis aurei ad Patris thronum conferas, precerisque, quatenus jugi Dominus Deus noster intuitu hic ingredientes et orantes tueri et gubernare dignetur," &c.—(Pontif. Anglo-Sax. Gemet. apud Mart. p. 204.) See note (D).

[1] Edd. Vit. Wilf. p. 60. Hist. Rames. 424, Hist. Elien. 489. The reader may perhaps be amused with the account of the dinner which St. Ethelwold had on one of these occasions prepared for his guests :—

Fercula sunt admixta epulis, cibus omnis abundat ;
Nullus adest tristis, omnis adest hilaris.
Nulla fames, ubi sunt cunctis obsonia plenis,
Et remanet vario mensa referta cibo.
Pincernæque vagi cellaria sæpe frequentant,
Convivasque rogant, ut bibere incipiant.
Crateras magnos statuunt, et vina coronant,
Miscentes potus potibus innumeris.
Fœcundi calices, ubi rusticus impiger hausit
Spumantem pateram gurgite mellifluam,
Et tandem pleno se totum proluit auro,
Setigerum mentum concutiendo suum.

Wolstan, p. 629.

[2] Ed. Vit. St. Wilf. c. xvii.

and the other benefactors, and invited those who conceived themselves entitled to any of the lands possessed by the monks, to come forward and advance their claim. As no one appeared, "I call then on you all," continued the ealdorman, "to bear witness before God and his saints, that on this day we have offered justice to every adversary, and that no man has dared to dispute our right. Will you after this permit any new claim to be preferred against us?" Several members delivered their sentiments, and the assembly decided unanimously in favour of Alwin. A volume of the gospels was immediately placed in the middle, and the ealdorman, putting his right hand on the book, swore that he would maintain, till his death, the monks of Ramsey in the rightful possession of their property. He was followed by his sons, and their example was imitated by every other person in the assembly.[1]

At the dedication of the church of Winchcombe (anno 811), a more splendid scene was exhibited. Cœnulf, king of Mercia, the founder of the abbey, had invited to the ceremony all the thanes of the kingdom, ten ealdormen, thirteen bishops, Cuthred, whom he had lately placed on the throne of Kent, and Sigfred, the tributary king of Essex. At the conclusion, he mounted the step of the principal altar, and calling for his captive, Eadberct Pren, the deposed king of Kent, liberated him without ransom in presence of the assembly. In the next place, he distributed gifts to all who attended at the dedication. The bishops and nobles received, in proportion to their respective ranks, vessels of gold or silver, with the fleetest horses; thanes without land,

[1] Hist. Ram. 422, 428.

a pound of silver; every mass-priest, a mancuse of pure gold; every monk and inferior clergyman, a shilling in silver; and each of the common people, a certain sum in silver pennies. These presents, if we may believe his charter, were meant as tokens of his gratitude to the nation, which in three successive councils had confirmed to him and his descendants the lands that he claimed in perpetual inheritance. He had raised this magnificent abbey as the place of sepulture for himself and the kings of his race; but the revolution of a few years demonstrated the vanity of his hopes. His only son perished in his nonage through the intrigues of an unprincipled aunt; the princes, his successors, succumbed to the superior power of the kings of Wessex, and the monastery within less than a century was reduced to a heap of ruins.[1]

[1] Malmes. i. 131. Wendover, i. 264. The charter supposed to have been signed on this occasion may be seen in the Monasticon Anglic. i. 189, and the Codex Dipl. i. 244. The monastery, after its destruction by the Danes, was partially restored by St. Oswald.

CHAPTER IX.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES.

ADMINISTRATION OF EXTREME UNCTION TO THE SICK—OF THE VIATICUM TO THE DYING—MANNER OF BURIAL—BURIALS IN CHURCHES—BURIAL OF ARCHBISHOP CUTHBERT—OF THE EALDORMAN BRYTHNOT—ELEVATION OF THE BODIES OF THE SAINTS—PRAYER FOR THE DEAD — ASSOCIATIONS — BENEFACTIONS FOR THAT PURPOSE — GOOD WORKS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE DECEASED—CHARITIES TO THE POOR—MANUMISSION OF SLAVES—RELIGIOUS SERVICES—TRANSLATION OF THE BODY OF ST. CUTHBERT.

In the two last chapters, the reader has seen how the church of the Anglo-Saxons took her children by the hand from their birth, and conducted them with the care of a mother through the succeeding stages of life, seeking by her sacraments to purify and preserve them from sin, and hallowing with her blessing their several states and professions in this world. It now remains that he watch her at the bed of the dying man, while she prepares him for his departure hence; and accompany her to the grave, where she recommends his soul to the mercy of his God.

At the first appearance of danger from sickness or accident, notice was forwarded to the parish priest. It was his duty to obey the summons. No plea but that of inability could justify refusal or hesitation. The following is the order of proceeding marked out for him in the Anglo-Saxon pontificals:—Attended by his inferior clergy in the habits of their orders, he was to repair to the home of the sick man, to offer to him the aid of his ministry, to admonish him of the necessity

"of putting his house in order" before he was summoned to the tribunal of God. He then called upon him to give proof of his belief in Christ, by repeating the Apostles' Creed, and of his charity towards man by declaring that he forgave all his enemies, as fully as he hoped to be forgiven. After these preliminaries he received the confession of the penitent, suggested to him sentiments of repentance and resignation, and, having exacted from him a second declaration that he would die in peace with all mankind, pronounced over him the prayer of reconciliation. The sacrament of "extreme unction" followed. The eyelids of the dying man, his ears, nostrils, lips, neck, shoulders, breast, hands, and feet, and the parts principally affected with pain, were successively anointed in the form of a cross: each separate unction was accompanied with an appropriate prayer, and followed by a psalm; and the promise in the epistle of St. James was read to him:—"That the prayer of faith should save the sick man, that the Lord should raise him up, and that, if he were in sins, they should be forgiven."[1] The whole of this

[1] "Now," says Ælfric, "we will tell you how James, the apostle of God, taught respecting the unction of the sick. He said to the believers thus:—If any one among you be sick, let him order to be fetched to him the mass-priest of the Church, and let them sing over him, and pray for him, and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord: and the prayer of the believers shall heal the sick man, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he be in sins, his sins shall be forgiven to him. Confess your sins among you, and pray for one another among you, that ye may be saved. Thus spake James the apostle, concerning the unction for sick men: but the sick, if he have any guilt unatoned for, must confess with compunction of heart before he be anointed, as the apostle hath already enjoined: and he must not be anointed before he ask for this, and make his confession. If he was before sinful and slothful, let him then make confession, and promise amendment of life, and give alms before his end, and he shall not be condemned to hell,

religious ceremony closed with the administration of the eucharist under the name of the viaticum, or "wayness" the support of the soul on its *way* to another world.[1]

It has been noticed that at the celebration of mass the communion was regularly distributed under both kinds; it was so also with the viaticum when the mass was celebrated in the presence of the sick.[2] But as this was seldom the case, the rubric ordered that the housel, consecrated at the mass, should be kept for that purpose under the kind of bread in a vessel called the eucharistial, and be carried by the priest to the communicant, whenever it might be required.[3]

When all these rites had been performed, the friends and relatives ranged themselves round the bed of the dying man, received from him small presents as memo-

but shall come to the mercy of God."—(Canons of Ælfric, Thorpe, xi. 354.)

[1] Wæġnerre (id. xi., 170, 176.)

[2] St. Cuthbert was placed in a chair at the altar, and communicated with the priest.

Sacer residens antistes ad altar,
Pocula degustat vitæ, Christique supinum
Sanguine munit iter. *Bed. Oper. Min.* p. 35.

[3] "We enjoin," says the canon, "that the priest have housel always ready for those who need it, and that he carefully preserve it in purity." —(Thorpe, ii. 252.) In monasteries, the eucharistial was generally deposited in the chapel of the infirmary. For thence, according to Beda, it was brought to Cædmon, who, having it in his hand—for the ancient custom of placing it in the palm of the communicant was still in use—declared 'that he died in peace with all men, and so fortifying himself with the heavenly viaticum prepared for his entry into another life.'—(Bed. l. iv. c. 24.) On one occasion, at Selsey, no housel had been preserved. To supply the want, mass was celebrated in the church, all the brethren communicated, and an offlete from the sacrifice was sent to a sick boy, that he might receive 'the viaticum of the body and blood of Christ.' Viaticum Dominici corporis et sanguinis . . . infirmanti puero de eodem sacrificio Dominicæ oblationis particulam deferri mandavit.—Bed. l. iv. c. 14.

rials of his affection, gave to him the kiss of peace, and bade him a last farewell.[1] He was not, however, left even now without spiritual aid. In parishes the priest or some of the clergy, in monasteries some of the monks, repeatedly visited him, consoled him, prayed with him, cited or chanted the canonical hours in his presence, read to him the passion of Christ from one of the evangelists, and made it their care that he should again receive the holy housel when the moment of his departure was manifestly approaching.[2] The moment he expired the bell was tolled.[3] Its solemn voice announced to the neighbourhood that a Christian brother was departed, and called on those who heard it to recommend his soul to the mercy of his Creator. All were expected to join, privately at least, in this charitable office; and in monasteries, even if it were the dead of the night, the inmates hastened from their beds to the church, and sang a solemn dirge.[4] The only persons excluded from the benefit of these prayers, were those who died avowedly in despair, or under the sentence of excommunication.[5]

[1] See the account of Beda's death in chapter XI.

[2] Conveniunt fratres ad ecclesiam . . . . alii rubiculum, in quo æger, animo robustus, egressum mortis, et vitæ expectabat ingressum, non deserunt. Evangelium tota nocte pro doloris levamine, quod et aliis noctibus fieri consueverat, a presbytero legitur: Dominici corporis et sanguinis sacramentum, hora exitus instante, pro viatico datur, et sic anima illa sancta supernæ beatitudinis libera pervolat ad gloriam.—Bed. Oper. Min. p. 153, de Bened. Biscopo.

[3] Audivit subito in aere *notum* campanæ sonum, quo ad orationes excitari vel convocari solebant, cum quis eorum de sæculo fuisset evocatus.—Bed. l. iv. c. 23.

[4] Suscitavit cunctas sorores, et in ecclesiam convocatas orationibus et psalmis pro anima matris operam dare monuit . . . . . Famulas Christi ad orandum pro anima ejus excitavit.—Bed. l. iv. c. 23.

[5] Talia dicens sine viatico salutis obiit, et corpus ejus in ultimis est monasterii locis humatum: neque aliquis pro eo vel missas

In the mean time, the friends of the deceased were employed in preparing the body for burial. The Greek and Roman Christians did not scruple to retain many customs which had been in use with their pagan ancestors; and these customs the Anglo-Saxon converts received from the missionaries. The corpse was first carefully washed and then clothed in decent garments.[1] With many it was an object to prepare during life the linen in which they wished to be buried; by others the richest presents which they had received from the affection of their friends were destined for this last office;[2] so that it frequently happened that the dead body was clothed in more splendid attire than had ever been worn by the living man. The distinctions of office were preserved on the bier and in the grave; and the bodies of kings and ealdormen, of bishops, priests, and deacons, were interred in the ornaments appropriated to their respective ranks. St. Cuthbert was laid in his coffin clothed in his episcopal vestments, with a patene, chalice, portable altar, offletes, and all that was necessary for the celebration of mass.[3] To

facere, vel psalmos cantare, vel saltem orare presumebat.—Bed. l. v. c. 14.

[1] Bed. Vit. S. Cuth. c. xliv. xlv. Edd. Vit. S. Wilf. c. xliii. Wilk. Con. 229, lxv. Bed. Op. Min. 281.

[2] Thus St. Cuthbert kept by him a linen garment given to him by the abbess Verca, that his body might be buried in it. Nolui quidem ea vivens indui, sed pro amore dilectæ Deo feminæ ad obvolvendum corpus meum reservare curavi.—(Bed. Vit. S. Cuth. c. xxxvii.) Thus, Ethelflede, aware that the hour of death was approaching, directed that the bath should be made ready; that, after she had been bathed, she should be dressed in the garment designed for her funeral, and that then mass should be celebrated; at which, "during the participation of the sacred body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, she would receive the communion, and, having the Lord to guide her, enter on her journey to the other world."—Bridferth. Act. SS. tom. iv. Maii. p. 350. M.S. Cleop. B. fol. 69.

[3] Oblatis supra sanctum pectus positis.—(Ibid.) These oblates were

satisfy affection or curiosity, the face and neck remained uncovered; and till the hour of burial, which was often delayed for some days to allow time for the arrival of strangers from a distance, small parties of monks or clergymen attended in rotation, either watching in silent prayer by the corpse, or chanting with subdued voice the funeral service.[1] Thus it was in religious communities, and the houses of the great; the lower classes still retained the wakes of their pagan forefathers, with many customs which were condemned but could not be suppressed by ecclesiastical authority. "Ye shall not," says the canon to the mass-priest, "make merry over men deceased, nor shall ye repair to the corpse, unless ye be invited thereto; and when ye are invited thereto, then forbid ye the heathen songs of the laymen, and their loud cachinnations; and neither eat ye nor drink ye where the corpse lieth therein, lest ye be imitators of the heathenism which they there commit."[2]

When the necessary preparations were completed, the body of the deceased was placed on a bier, or in a hearse. On it lay the book of the gospels, the code of his belief; and the cross, the emblem of his hope. A pall of linen or silk was thrown over it, till it reached the place of interment.[3] His friends were invited,

the offletes or ofleys, which word has been already explained. When the tomb of Archbishop Theodore was opened in 1091, remains were found of all the episcopal ornaments and the pallium. On his head had been placed a monk's cowl.—Gotselin, apud Smith, p. 189.

[1] This was the origin of the present custom of bodies lying in state for some days before burial.

[2] Ælfric's Canons, Thorpe ii. 356. To watch the dead is still customary in some places, and is called in the north of England the lake-wake from the Saxon lichæcce, or corpse-watch.

[3] If the distance was great, a cross of stone was frequently erected

strangers often deemed it a duty, to attend. The clergy walked in procession before, or divided into two bodies, one on each side, singing a portion of the psalter, and generally bearing lights in their hands.[1] As soon as they entered the church, the service for the dead was performed: a mass of requiem followed; the body was deposited in the grave; the sawlshot paid; and a liberal donation distributed to the poor.[2]

We are told that the Italian missionaries, probably in accordance with the Roman custom at the time,

at every spot where the corpse had rested. Thus St. Aldhelm died at the distance of fifty miles from Glastonbury, and at every seven miles of the road a cross pointed out the resting-place to later ages. All seven were still standing in the time of Malmesbury, and were called "bishopstones."—Ang. Sac. ii. p. 25.

[1] Feretrum sacrosanctis evangeliis et crucibus armatum—palliorum velamentis ornatum—accensis luminaribus, atque psalmorum concentibus.—(Wolstan, Vit. S. Ethelwoldi. Act. SS. Ben. sæc. v. p. 623.) No mention is made of lights, but only of the singing at the funerals of St. Cuthbert (Bed. Vit. c. xl.), of St. Wilfrid (Edd. c. lxiii.), and of Ceolfrith (Bed. Oper Min. 132, 162). The attendants sometimes beat their faces in token of their grief. Facies suas dissecantes, sese ferientes, et amaris vocibus clamantes.—(Ang. Sac. ii. 119.) The method of interment among the Scots is thus described by Cummian: Corpus (S. Columbæ) ad hospitium cum canora fratrum psalmodia reportatur, ubi etiam ternis diebus cum totidem noctibus honorabiles exequiæ rite explentur. Quibus in Dei laudibus terminatis, sanctum corpus, mundis involutum sindonibus, cum debita veneratione humatur, æternali claritudine quandoque resurrecturum.—C. xxiii. Vit. SS. Scot. p. 42.

[2] This description applies chiefly to the funerals of the higher classes, which are occasionally mentioned in ancient documents: but the same service was performed for all. The coffins generally were of wood, and therefore called chests and troughs, from cỳrce and þruh.—(Smith's Beda, s. 535, 580, 588, 608.) From passages in Beda, it would appear that the coffin was often prepared beforehand, and, when of wood, was placed by the side of the dying man. Jamjamque moriturus videbatur; cui etiam loculus jam tunc erat præparatus in quo condi deberet . . . . Intravit et vidit eum jam morti proximum, positumque loculum in quo sepeliendus poni deberet.—(Bed. l. v. c. 5.) In the stone coffin, a place was hollowed for the head, and occasionally a cushion was placed under the head for its support.—(Bed. l. iv. c. 11, 19.) We have also an instance of a leaden coffin prepared as a present for St. Guthlake.—Vita S. Guthlaci, in Leland's Itin. iv. app. p. 111.

forbad the interment of the dead within populous towns.[1] At Canterbury, the public cemetery lay without the walls,[2] adjoining to the church of St. Peter and Paul, which the king had built as a place of sepulture for himself and his successors on the throne, and for Augustine and his successors in the bishopric; not that they should be interred within the church itself—for many thought it an irreverence to lay the bodies of the dead within the temple of the Most High—but within the spacious porticos which served as entrances to the church. Ethelbert himself, and his queen Bertha, were buried in that which had been dedicated to St. Martin. Augustine and his immediate successors found a resting-place in the northern portico, round an altar erected in honour of St. Gregory, on which a mass was offered every Saturday for the souls of the departed archbishops.[3] But at the death of Theodore (anno 690), it was found that the porch was full: to inter him among the promiscuous multitude in the public cemetery was thought indecorous; and it was determined to honour his merit with a place of sepulture within the church, but as near as was possible to the tombs of his predecessors.[4] What had been

[1] Gervase, p. 1641.

[2] At the consecration of the cemetery a cross was erected in the centre of the ground, and one at each of the four corners, corresponding with the four cardinal points. The bishop began by making the circuit of the ground with his clergy, chanting the litany at the same time. He then read a portion of the service at the eastern cross, did the same at the southern, western, and northern crosses, and concluded it at the cross in the centre.—(Martene ex Pont. Egberti, l. ii. c. xx. p. 294.) The bodies were buried with their feet to the east, and probably in rows, as was the custom in the cemetery at Ely. Ut ipsa jusserat, non alibi quam in medio eorum, juxta *ordinem quo transierat*, ligneo in locello sepulta.—Beda de Obitu S. Ædelthrydæ, iv. c. 19.

[3] Bed. l. i. c. 33; l. ii. c. 111, v.

[4] Id. l. ii. c. 11.

conceded to him could not be refused with propriety to his successors, nor were the inmates of the abbey disposed to part with a privilege which conferred a proud distinction on their church, and increased the conflux of visitors and benefactors. This very circumstance excited the jealousy of Cuthbert, the eleventh archbishop, who complained that a private monastery in the suburbs had usurped that pre-eminence which belonged to his church, the first in dignity among the churches of Britain. Eadbyrht, king of Kent, gave a willing ear to his suggestions; and the pontiff (if we may believe his friends, for it is denied by his opponents)[1] approved his intention. On his death-bed (anno 758) he summoned his monks and clergy around him, and commanded them to inter his body, in secrecy and silence, within the walls of his cathedral. The command was cheerfully obeyed; and three days elapsed before his death was made known. At the sound of the funeral bell, Jaenbyrcht, abbot of St. Peter's and St. Paul's, assembled his monks, and repaired in procession to the archiepiscopal palace to demand the body. They were informed that their services were not wanted, for the dead prelate was interred already. The sting of disappointment was sharpened by the ridicule of their opponents; and they vented their indignation in menaces, remonstrances, and protests. But menaces, remonstrances, and protests, were fruitless. The charm of ancient custom had been broken; and all the succeeding archbishops,

[1] By Gervase, the monk of Christchurch, it is positively asserted (X Script. p. 1641); by Thorne, the monk of St. Augustin's, it is as positively denied (X Script. p. 1774).

with only one exception, were buried in Christ Church, their own cathedral.[1]

This custom of interring kings and bishops within the precincts of the church prevailed also in the north among the disciples of the Scottish missionaries. Thus Oidilwald, king of the Deiri, and son of King Oswald, founded a monastery, that it might be the place of his sepulture, because "he was confident of deriving great benefit from the prayers of those who should serve the Lord in that house."[2] This persuasion soon became universal; and numerous benefactions were made to religious establishments, on the express condition that the donor after death might obtain a burial-place in the church, or in the cemetery of the brethren. Compacts of this sort crowd the Saxon annals; I select one from the history of Ely, respecting Byrhtnoth, ealdorman of Essex, a warrior whose reputation had been earned in many a well-fought battle against the invaders of his country. By a great victory at Maldon, he had taught the Danes to respect his valour; but the barbarians sailed back to Denmark, recruited their numbers, and returned to England in search of revenge. They advanced a second time as far as Maldon, that the place which had witnessed their defeat, might be the theatre of their future triumph. A challenge was

[1] See Decem Scriptores, pp. 1259, 1641, 1772, 2210. The kings, however, were still buried in St. Peter's and St. Paul's, for we have a charter by Dunwald the thane, stating that he was about to leave England to carry to Rome the alms of his deceased lord, King Ethelbert (anno 762); and therefore before his departure he bequeathed a mansion in the market in Queengate to the said church, for the benefit of the king's soul and his own soul, because *the body* of the king had been *buried there*.—Cod. Dipl. i. 133.

[2] Nam et seipsum credidit multum juvari eorum orationibus qui illo in loco Domino deservirent.—Bed. iii. c. 23.

sent to Byrhtnoth, which found him unprepared, and attended by few of his retainers. But the high-spirited ealdorman preferred the probability of an honourable death to the disgrace of a refusal. As he passed by Ramsey, Wulsig, the abbot, a prelate as parsimonious as he was rich, invited him to dinner with seven of his officers. "Go, tell thy master," replied the chief to the messenger, "that as I must not fight, so neither will I dine, without my companions." From Ramsey he proceeded to Ely, where his little army was hospitably received; and banished, over a plenteous repast, their recollection of past fatigue, and the thought of future danger. In the morning he entered the chapter-house, returned thanks to the monks for their liberality, and made to them the offer of several valuable manors, on condition that, if it were his lot to fall in battle, they should bury his body within their church. The condition was accepted, and he marched towards the enemy. Within the short space of a fortnight fourteen battles were fought with the most obstinate valour. In the last the men of Essex rushed with blind impetuosity on the host of the Danes. It was the combat of despair against overpowering numbers. Byrhtnoth fell; his head was conveyed by the invaders to Denmark, as the trophy of victory; the trunk was discovered by the monks among the dead, and was solemnly interred, according to their promise, in the church of the abbey. To honour the memory of her husband, his widow Ethelfledc embroidered in silk the history of his exploits, and gave it to the monastery to be suspended over his tomb.[1]

[1] Hist. Elien. p. 494. This battle of Maldon became the subject of a

Here it should be observed that peculiar honours were allotted to the remains of those who enjoyed the reputation of superior sanctity. The bodies of their brethren were left to moulder away in the earth; those of the saints were raised from their graves, and richly enshrined in the interior of the church. Of this species of canonization, the only one practised at that period, numerous instances occur in the works of our more early writers. Generally, perhaps always, it was preceded by a petition to the bishop, and sanctioned with his approval. Ten or twenty years after the death of the man, the object of their veneration, when it might be presumed that the less solid parts of the body had been reduced to dust, the monks or clergy assembled to perform the ceremony of his elevation. A tent was pitched over the grave. Around it stood the great body of the attendants chanting the Psalms of David: within, the superior, accompanied by the more aged of the brotherhood, opened the earth, collected the bones, washed them, wrapped them carefully in silk or linen, and deposited them in a mortuary chest.[1] With sentiments of respect, and hymns of exultation, they were then carried to the place destined to receive them; which was elevated above the pavement, and decorated with appropriate ornaments. Thus St. Chad, bishop of Mercia, had been interred close to the church, but in the open air. A new church was built, and his bones were taken up and deposited in a shrine within the

poem, a fragment of which has come down to us, and been published by Mr. Thorpe in his Analecta.

[1] Bed. Hist. l. iv. c. 19, 30. Vit. S. Cuth. c. xlii Act. SS. Bened. sæc. iv. tom. i. p. 310; sæc. v. p. 735.

sacred building.[1] St. Cuthbert had been laid in a coffin of stone within the church: eleven years later his body, with the permission of Bishop Eadbert, was placed in a shrine raised over the former spot.[2] The shrines in both instances were of wood; and that of St. Chad was shaped like a house, and covered with tapestry.[3] But this was in an age of monastic simplicity. At a later period, though the original form of the shrines remained the same, the magnificence of their ornaments bespoke the increased opulence of the Church, and served to allure the rapacity of the Danish invaders.

We have witnessed the religious rites practised by our ancestors at the bed-side of the dying, and the funerals of the dead: we now proceed to notice the devotions and acts of charity performed in behalf of the departed soul.

The Anglo-Saxons had inherited from their teachers the practice of prayer for the dead—a practice common to every Christian church which dates its origin from any period before the Reformation. It was not that they pretended to benefit by their prayers the blessed in heaven, or the reprobate in hell; but they had never heard of the doctrine which teaches that "every soul of man, passing out of the body, goeth immediately to one or other of those places;"[4] and therefore, assuming that

[1] Bed. l. iv. c. 3, anno 672.

[2] Bed. Vit. S. Cuth. c. xl. xlii. Consilio a decanibus facto, et a sancto episcopo Eadberto licentia data.—Vit. S. Cuth. in Bed. Op. Min. p. 282.

[3] Locus idem sepulchri tumba lignea in modum domunculi facta, coopertus.—(Bed. iv. c. 3.) This is translated by Alfred—"Over his burial-place is timber work in likeness of a small house, clothed with tapestry."—Bed. Sax. 570.

[4] Book of Homilies, Hom. vii. On Prayer.

God will render to all according to their works,[1] they believed that the souls of men dying in a state of less perfect virtue, though they might not be immediately admitted to the supreme felicity of the saints, would not at least be visited with the everlasting punishment of the wicked.[2] It was for such as these that they prayed, that if they were in a state of imperfect happiness, that happiness might be augmented; if in a state of temporary punishment, the severity of that punishment might be mitigated; and this they hoped to obtain from the mercy of God, in consideration of their prayers, and fasts and alms, and especially of the "oblation of the most holy victim in the sacrifice of the mass."[3]

This was a favourite form of devotion with our ancestors. It came to them recommended by the practice of all antiquity; it was considered an act of the purest charity on behalf of those who could no longer pray for

[1] Matt. xvi. 27; Rom. ii. 6; Rev. xxii. 12.

[2] "Some souls proceed to rest after their departure; some go to punishment for that which they have done, and are often released by alms-deeds, but chiefly through the mass, if it be offered for them; others are condemned with the devil to hell."—(Serm. ad. Pop. in Oct. Pent.) "There be many places of punishment, in which souls suffer in proportion to their guilt before the general judgment, so that some of them are fully cleansed, and have nothing to suffer in that fire of the last day."—Hom. apud Whelock, p. 386.

[3] Sunt quorumdam justorum animæ, quæ de cœlesti regno, licet in beata requie, quibusdam adhuc mansionibus differuntur . . . . quod de perfecta justitia aliquid minus habuerunt.—(Beda in Thes. Anect. v. 326. Gerb. Litur. Allem. 11, 318.) Nonnulli propter bona quædam opera ad sortem justorum præordinati, sed propter mala aliqua, quibus polluti de corpore exierunt, post mortem severe castigandi, excipiuntur flammis purgatorii ignis, et vel usque ad judicii diem longa examinatione a vitiorum sorde mundantur; vel certe prius amicorum fidelium precibus, eleemosynis, jejuniis, fletibus, et hostiæ salutaris oblationibus absoluti pœnis, et ipsi ad beatorum perveniunt requiem.—Bed. Hom. xlix. p. 381.

themselves; it enlisted in its favour the feelings of the survivor, who was thus enabled to intercede with God for his nearest and dearest friends, and it opened at the same time to the mourner a source of real consolation in the hour of bereavement and distress. It is true, indeed, that the petitioners knew not the state of the departed soul; he might be incapable of receiving any benefit from their prayers, but they reasoned, with St. Augustine, that, even so, the piety of their intention would prove acceptable to God. When Alcuin heard that Edilthryde, an Anglo-Saxon lady, lamented most bitterly the death of her son, he wrote to her from his retreat at Tours, in the following terms:—"Mourn not for him whom you cannot recall. If he be of God, instead of grieving that you have lost him, rejoice that he is gone to rest before you. Where there are two friends, I hold the death of the first preferable to that of the second, because the first leaves behind him one whose brotherly love will intercede for him daily, and whose tears will wash away the frailties of his life in this world. Be assured that your pious solicitude for the soul of your son will not be thrown away. It will benefit both you and him—you, because you exercise acts of hope and charity, him, because such acts will tend either to mitigate his sufferings, or to add to his happiness."[1]

[1] Noli lugere eum, quem revocare non poteris: et si Dei est, non illum doleas amissum, sed tibi in requiem gaudeas præmissum. Si duo sunt amici, felicior est mors præcedentis, quam subsequentis: habet enim qui fraterno amore pro se quotidie intercedat, et lacrymis lavet pristinæ errores vitæ. Nec dubites prodesse piæ solicitudinis curam quam pro anima illius geris. Tibi proficit et illi: tibi, quia in fide facis et dilectione; illi, ut vel pœna levigetur, vel beatitudo augeatur.—Ep. cli. tom. i. p. 212.

But they did not only pray for others, they were careful to secure for themselves, after their departure, the prayers of their friends. This they frequently solicited as a favour or a recompense, and for this they entered into mutual compacts by which the survivor was bound to perform certain works of piety or charity for the soul of the deceased. Thus Beda begs of the monks of Lindisfarne that, at his death, they will offer prayers and masses for him as one of their own body;[1] thus Alcuin calls upon his former scholars at York to remember him in their prayers when it shall please God to withdraw him from this world;[2] and thus in the multifarious correspondence of St. Boniface, the apostle of Germany, and of Lullus, his successor in the see of Mentz, both of them Anglo-Saxons, with their countrymen, prelates, abbots, thanes, and princes, we meet with letters the only object of which is to renew their previous engagements, and to transmit the names of their defunct associates. It is our "earnest wish," says the king of Kent and the bishop of Rochester, in their common letter to Lullus, "to recommend ourselves and our dearest relatives to your piety, that by your prayers we may be protected till we come to that life which knows no end. For what have we to do on earth but faithfully to exercise charity towards each other? Let us then agree, that when any among us enter the path which leads to another life (may it be a life of happiness!) the survivors shall, by their alms and sacrifices, endeavour

[1] Bed. Oper. Min. p. 47.

[2] Si te, fili mi, superstite hæc hora mortis adveniat patri, tu cum tuis omnibus fidelis intercessor adesto, &c.—Alc. Op. 1. Ep. ccxiii. See also pp. 231, 236.

to assist him in his journey. We have sent you the names of our deceased relations, Irmige, Norththry, and Dulicha, virgins dedicated to God, and beg that you will remember them in your prayers and oblations. On a similar occasion we will prove our gratitude by imitating your charity."[1]

Such covenants were not confined to the clergy or to persons in the higher ranks of life. England at this period was covered with "gilds," or associations of townsmen and neighbours, not directly for religious purposes, but having a variety of secular objects in view,—such as the promotion of trade and commerce, the preservation of property and the prosecution of thieves, the legal defence of the members against oppression, and the recovery of bots, or penalties, to which they were entitled; but whatever might be their chief object, all imposed one common obligation, that of accompanying the bodies of the deceased members to the grave, of paying the soul-shot for them at their interment, and of distributing alms for the repose of their souls. As a specimen of such engagements I may here translate a portion of the laws established in the gild at Abbotsbury. "If," says the legislator, "any one belonging to this association chance to die, each member shall pay one penny for the good of the soul before the body be laid in the grave. If he neglect, he shall be fined in

[1] S. Bonif. Ep. 77, p. 108. Also Ep. 24, 52, 74, 95, 105, 109. Thus also Cuthbert of Canterbury, in his letter to Lullus of Mentz, says of those who continue to observe the institutions of St. Boniface—pro certo sciant et ipsius Romanæ et Apostolicæ ecclesiæ, a qua legatus eis et doctor directus est, ac deinde pariter omnium nostrum habere se et viventes et morientes in oratione et missarum celebratione perpetuam communionem.—Inter Bonif. Ep. lxx. p. 96.

a triple sum. If any of us fall sick within sixty miles, we engage to find fifteen men, who may bring him home; but if he die first, we will send thirty to convey him to the place in which he desired to be buried. If he die in the neighbourhood, the steward shall inquire where he is to be interred, and shall summon as many members as he can to assemble, attend the corpse in an honourable manner, carry it to the minster, and pray devoutly for the soul. Let us act in this manner, and we shall truly perform the duty of our confraternity. This will be honourable to us both before God and man. For we know not who among us may die first; but we believe that, with the assistance of God, this agreement will profit us all if it be rightly observed."[1]

But the clerical and monastic bodies inhabiting the more celebrated monasteries offered guildships of a superior description. Among them the service for the dead was performed with greater solemnity; the rules of the institute insured the faithful performance of the duty; and additional value was ascribed to their prayers on account of the sanctity of the place and the virtue of its inmates. Hence it became an object with many to obtain admission among the brotherhood in quality of honorary associates; an admission which gave to them a right to the same spiritual benefits after death to which the professed members were entitled. Such associates were of two classes. To some the favour

[1] Monast. Ang. i. 278. A similar regulation is found among the laws of the gild in London. "And we have ordained respecting every man who has given his 'wed' in our gildships, if he should die, that each gild-brother shall give a 'gesuful' loaf for his soul, and sing a fifty, or get it sung within thirty days."—Laws of London Gilds, Thorpe, i. 236. See also Hickesii Dissert. Ep. pp. 18—21.

was conceded on account of their reputation for piety or learning; to others it was due on account of their benefactions. Instances of both abound in the Anglo-Saxon records. Beda, though a monk at Jarrow, procured his name to be entered for this purpose on the beadroll of the monks at Lindisfarne;[1] and Alcuin, though a canon at Tours in France, had obtained a similar favour from the monks at Jarrow.[2] It belonged of right to the founders of churches; to those who had made to them valuable benefactions,[3] or had rendered to them important services, or had bequeathed to them a yearly rent-charge[4] for that purpose. Of all these individuals an exact catalogue was kept; the days of their decease were carefully noted,[5] and on their anni-

[1] Me defuncto, pro redemptione animæ meæ, quasi *familiaris et vernaculi vestri*, orare, et missas facere, et nomen meum inter vestra scribere dignemini: nam et tu sanctissime antistes, hoc te mihi promisisse jam retines, in cujus etiam testimonium futuræ conscriptionis religioso fratri vestro Gudfrido mansionario præcepisti, ut in *albo* vestræ sanctæ congregationis meum nunc quoque nomen apponeret.—Bed. Præf. ad. Vit. S. Cuthb. p. 47.

[2] Me gremio charitatis in communionem sanctæ charitatis vestræ suscipere dignati estis.—Alc. Oper. i. Ep. ccxviii. ad Fratres Gyrv. p. 281.

[3] When Osulf, ealdorman by the grace of God, gave the land at Stanhamstede to Christchurch, he most humbly prayed that he and his wife Beornthrythe might be admitted "into the *fellowship* of God's servants there, and of their lords who had been, and of those who had given lands to that church."—Cod. Dipl. i. 292.

[4] The following is an instance of a rent-charge given by Ealburge and Eadweald to Christchurch for themselves, and for Ealred and Ealwyne—forty ambres of malt, two hundred loaves, one wey (246 lb.) of cheese, one wey of bacon, an ox of full age, four wethers, ten geese, twenty fowls, and four fothers of wood. "And I, Ealburge," she continues, "command Ealwyne, my son, in the name of God and of all his saints, that he perform this during his day, and then command his heirs to perform it, as long as Christendom shall endure."—Ibid. i. 296.

[5] Quærant in codicibus suis, in quibus defunctorum est annotata depositio.—(Bed. iv. c. 14.) According to Wanley, there is in the Cotton Library (Dom. A. 7) a MS. of the reign of Athelstan, in which

versaries a solemn service of masses and psalmody was yearly performed. It may be easily conceived that to men of timorous and penitent minds this custom would afford much consolation. However great might be their deficiencies, yet they hoped that their good works would survive them; they had provided for the service of the Almighty a race of men, whose virtues they might in one respect call their own, and who were bound, by the strongest ties, to be their daily advocates at the throne of divine mercy.[1] Such were the sentiments of Alwyn, the ealdorman of East Anglia, and one of the founders of Ramsey. Warned by frequent infirmities of his approaching death, he repaired, attended by his sons Edwin and Ethelward, to the abbey. The monks were speedily assembled. "My beloved," said he, "you will soon lose your friend and protector. My strength is gone: I am stolen from myself. But I am not afraid to die. When life grows tedious, death is welcome. To-day I shall confess before you the many errors of my life. Think not that I wish you to solicit a prolongation of my existence. My request is that

the names of the chief benefactors of the church of Lindisfarne are written in letters of gold and silver; which catalogue was afterwards continued, but not in the same manner.—(Wanley, 249.) This is probably the same book which was published in 1841, by the Surtees Society, ander the name of Liber Vitæ Ecclesiæ Dunelmensis. It contains the names of all the benefactors of St. Cuthbert's church from its foundation, and lay constantly on the altar for upwards of six centuries. It contains the following prayer for the benefactors:—Deprecamur te, Domine sancte Pater, per Jesum Christum filium tuum in Spiritu Sancto, ut eorum nomina sint scripta in libro vitæ. —P. 18.

[1] Thus when Leofric established canons in the church of Exeter, he made them several valuable presents, on condition that, in their prayers and masses, they should always remember his soul, "that it might be the more pleasing to God: ꝥ hiꝛ ꝛaꝛle beo Loðe ꝥe anꝛengꝛe."—Monas. Ang. tom. i. p. 222.

you protect my departure by your prayers, and place your merits in the balance against my defects. When my soul shall have quitted my body, honour your father's corpse with a decent funeral, grant him a constant share in your prayers, and recommend his memory to the charity and gratitude of your successors." At the conclusion of this address, the aged thane threw himself on the pavement before the altar, and, with a voice interrupted by frequent sighs, publicly confessed the sins of his past years, and earnestly implored the mercies of his Redeemer. The monks were dissolved in tears. As soon as their sensibility permitted them to begin, they chanted over him the seven psalms of penitence, and the prior Germanus read the prayer of absolution. With the assistance of Edwin and Ethelward he arose; and supporting himself against a column, exhorted the brotherhood to a punctual observance of their rule, and forbade his sons, under their father's malediction, to molest them in the possession of the lands which he had bestowed on the abbey. Then, having embraced each monk, and asked his blessing, he returned to his residence in the neighbourhood. This was his last visit. Within a few weeks he died: his body was interred with proper solemnity in the church; and his memory was long cherished with gratitude by the monks of Ramsey.[1]

There were three kinds of good works usually performed for the benefit of the dead:—1. One consisted in the distribution of charity. To the money, which the deceased, if he were in opulent or in easy circum-

[1] Hist. Rames. p. 427.

stances, bequeathed for that purpose, an addition was often made by the contributions of his relatives and friends. Large sums were often distributed in this manner. King Alfred, in his will, says, "Let there be given for me, and for my father, and for the friends that he prayed for, and that I pray for, two hundred pounds; fifty among the mass-priests throughout my kingdom, fifty among the servants of God that are in need, fifty among lay paupers, and fifty to the church in which my body shall rest."[1] Archbishop Wulfred, in his will (an. 831), made provision for the permanent support and clothing of twenty-seven paupers, out of the income from certain manors which at his own cost and labour he had recovered for the church of Canterbury.[2] Frequently the testator bequeathed a yearly dole of money and provisions to the poor on the anniversary of his death. Thus the clergy of Christchurch gave away one hundred and twenty suffles, or cakes of fine flour, on the anniversaries of each of their lords, by which word we are probably to understand the archbishops; but Wulfred was not content with this accustomed charity; he augmented it tenfold on his own anniversary, having bequeathed a loaf, a certain quantity of cheese, and a silver penny to be delivered to twelve hundred poor persons on that day. Of such doles some vestiges still remain in certain parts of the kingdom.[3]

[1] Cod. Diplom. xi. 115.

[2] Five paupers were to be kept at Herge, five at Ottfort, two at Cliffe, two at Gaveny, seven at Westeslun, and six in Canterbury; each of whom was to receive a sufficiency of food daily, besides twenty-six pennies annually to provide himself with clothing.—Cod. Diplom. p. 298.

[3] Ibid. i. 293.

2. Another species of charity, at the death of the upper ranks, was the grant of freedom to a certain number of slaves, whose poverty, to render the benefit more valuable, was relieved with a handsome present. In the council of Calcuith, it was unanimously agreed, that each prelate at his death should bequeath the tenth part of his personal property to the poor, and set at liberty all bondmen of English descent whom the church had acquired during his administration; and that each bishop and abbot who survived him, should manumit three of his slaves, and give three shillings to each, for the benefit of the soul of the deceased prelate.[1]

3. The devotions in behalf of the dead consisted in the frequent repetition of the Lord's Prayer, technically called a belt of Pater-nosters,[2] which was in use with private individuals, ignorant of the Latin tongue; 2nd, in the chanting of a certain number of psalms, generally fifty, terminating with the collect for the dead, during which collect all knelt down, and then repeated the anthem in Latin or English, "According to thy great mercy give rest to his soul, O Lord, and of thine infinite bounty grant to him eternal light in the company

[1] Wilk. Con. p. 171, x. We have Archbishop Ælfric's will, made two hundred years later, in which this canon is faithfully obeyed. "And his will is, that men make free after his day every man condemned to slavery in his time."—(Test. Ælf. apud Mores, p. 63.) See also similar directions in the will of Athelstan, at the end of Lye's Saxon dictionary.

[2] A belt of Pater-nosters appears to correspond with a string of beads of later times. How many Pater-nosters it contained, is not known. But, as it was substituted for the psalter, and the psalter was divided into three portions of fifty psalms each, it is probable that the same number was observed, and that the belt comprised fifty Pater-nosters.

of thy saints;[1] 3rd, in the sacrifice of the mass, which was offered as soon as might be after death; again on the third day, and afterwards as often as was required by the solicitude of the relatives or friends of the deceased. No sooner had St. Wilfred expired, than Tatbert, to whom he had intrusted the government of his monastery at Ripon, ordered a mass to be celebrated, and alms to be distributed daily for his soul. On his anniversary the abbots of all the monasteries founded by Wilfrid were summoned to attend; they spent the preceding night in watching and prayer, on the following morn a solemn mass was performed, and then the tenth part of the cattle belonging to the monastery was distributed among the neighbouring poor.[2]

In like manner we find the ealdorman Osulf, "for the redemption and health of his own soul, and of his wife Beornthrythe," giving certain lands to the church of Liming in Kent, under the express condition that "every twelve months afterwards the day of their departure out of this life should be kept with fasting and prayer to God, in psalmody, and the celebration of masses."[3]

[1] Wilk. Con. 99, xxvii. On the death of St. Guthlake, his sister Pega recommended his soul to God, and sung psalms for that purpose during three days. Trium dierum spatiis fraternum spiritum divinis laudibus Deo commendavit.—(Vit. S. Guthl. in Act. SS. Apr. tom. iii. p. 49.) It was perhaps from some similar expression that Whelock (p. 297), and Inett (Hist. i. 227), drew the conclusion, that the object of the prayers and alms for the dead was to return thanks to God for the happiness enjoyed by their souls. But the prelates at Calcuith must have known their own meaning, which they tell us, was ut communis intercessionis gratia commune cum sanctis omnibus regnum percipere mereantur æternum.—Wilk. Con. 1, 171.

[2] Edd. Vit. Wilf. c. lxii.

[3] Hac conditione interposita ut, unoquoque anno post xii mensibus, migrationis nostræ tempus celebretur cum jejunio divinisque orationibus,

It would appear that some doubt existed with respect to the exact meaning of this condition; and a few years later the archbishop, to set the question at rest, pronounced the following decree: —"Wherefore I order that the godly deeds following be performed for their souls at the tide of their anniversary; that every mass-priest celebrate two masses for the soul of Osulf, and two for Beornthrythe's soul; that every deacon read two passions [the narratives of our Lord's sufferings in the gospels] for his soul, and two for hers; and each of God's servants [the inferior members of the brotherhood] two fifties" [fifty psalms] "for his soul, two for hers; that as you in the world are blessed with worldly goods through them, so they may be blessed with godly goods through you."[1] It should, however, be observed, that such devotions were not confined to the anniversaries of the dead. In many, perhaps in all, of these religious establishments, the whole community on certain days walked, at the conclusion of the matin service, in procession to the cemetery, and there chanted the dirge over the graves of their deceased brethren and benefactors.[2]

Respecting these practices some most extraordinary opinions have occasionally been hazarded. We have been told that the custom of praying for the dead was no part of the religious system originally taught to the Anglo-Saxons, that it was not generally received for two centuries after their conversion, and that it probably

in psalmodiis et missarum celebrationibus. — (Cod. Dipl. i. 212.) The fast lasted only to the conclusion of the service. At dinner, the community fared more sumptuously than was usual, and a dole was made to the poor.

[1] Ibid. p. 292.

[2] See Beda, l. iv. c. 7.

took its rise "from a mistaken charity, continuing to do for the departed what it was only lawful to do for the living."[1] To this supposition it may be sufficient to reply, that it is supported by no reference to ancient authority, but contradicted in every page of Anglo-Saxon history. Others have admitted the universal prevalence of the practice, but have discovered that it originated in the interested views of the clergy, who employed it as a constant source of emolument, and laughed among themselves at the easy faith of their disciples.[2] But this opinion is subject to equal difficulties with the former. It rests on no ancient testimony: it is refuted by the conduct of the ancient clergy. No instance is to be found of any one of these conspirators,

[1] Mr. Churton makes the following comment on the decree of Archbishop Wulfred mentioned above:—"It is plain that this injunction was given whilst the persons who gave the alms were still alive, and there was nothing wrong that the priests should pray for them as we do for all the members of the church militant in the communion service .... It does not however show that the custom of offering masses for the dead was now" (the beginning of the ninth century) "generally received: but where it was, that it probably began in a mistaken charity, continuing to do for the departed what it was only lawful to do for the living; for it is seen in many writings of the time, that devout Christians of the time of Bede and Alcuin were constant in prayer for each other, and entreating the prayers of each other." —(Churton, Early English Church, p. 186.) Now, whether Osulf and Beornwulf were living when the archbishop made his decree, as Mr. Churton asserts, is what no man knows; nor is it of any importance, for the decree regards the manner of keeping the anniversaries of their death, and, as such anniversaries could not be kept whilst they were living, it is plain that the archbishop's regulations could have nothing in common with the prayer for the church militant in the Anglican ritual. Mr. Churton seems to have forgotten that the mass was introduced by the first missionaries, both in the north and the south, and that prayer for the dead formed an integral part of the canon of the mass. Hence such prayer must have always prevailed in every part of the Anglo-Saxon church, the mass being the daily service of that church.

[2] Whelock, preface to Archaionomia in his Beda, and in Wilkins, præf. Whel. p. xxi. Mosheim, sec. viii. part ii. c. 3. Tillotson, Serm. on 1 Cor. iii. 15.

as they are represented, who in an unguarded moment, or of any false brother who, in the peevishness of discontent, revealed the secret to the ears of their dupes. On the contrary, we see them in their private correspondence holding to each other the same language which they held to their disciples; requesting from each other those prayers which we are told that they mutually despised, and making pecuniary sacrifices during life to purchase what, if their accusers be correct, they deemed an illusory assistance after death. We see Beda, one whose sincerity is beyond suspicion, about three hours before he expired, call the priests of his monastery to his bed-side, distribute among them presents, as memorials of his affection, and then most earnestly solicit each of them in succession to offer up prayers and masses for his soul.[1] Is it possible to believe that he looked upon such prayers as an imposition practised to bring money to the clergy?

I shall conclude this chapter with a narrative both interesting in itself and illustrative of the manner in which the Anglo-Saxons interred the dead. It will relate the appearances which presented themselves to the spectators at the opening of the coffin of St. Cuthbert, in 1104, and is taken from a memoir written at the time by an eye-witness, in all probability Simeon, the Durham historian.

William, the second bishop of Durham after the Conquest, had collected for the service of his cathedral a society of monks, and, dissatisfied with the low and obscure church of his predecessors, had laid the founda-

[1] See Cuthbert's letter, with the account of his death, at the end of the next chapter but one.

tions of a more spacious and stately fabric. In the year 1104, it was nearly completed; and the twenty-ninth of August was announced as the day on which the incorrupt body of St. Cuthbert would be transferred from the old to the new church. The nobility and clergy of the neighbouring counties were invited to the ceremony, and Richard abbot of St. Albans, Radulfus abbot of Seez in Normandy, and Alexander brother to the king of Scots, had arrived to honour it with their presence. But among this crowd of learned and noble visitors the whispers of incredulity were heard; the claim of the monks was said to rest on the faith of a vague and doubtful tradition, and it was asked, where were the proofs that the body of the saint was entire, or even that his ashes reposed within the church of Durham? Who could presume to assert that, at the distance of four centuries, it still remained in the same state as at the time of Beda;[1] or that, during its numerous removals and the devastations of the Danes, it had never perished through the negligence or flight of its attendants? These reports alarmed the monks, and that alarm was considerably increased by the intelligence that the bishop himself was among the number of the sceptics. With haste and secrecy the brotherhood was summoned to the chapter-house, the advice of the more discreet was asked and discussed, and, after a long and solemn consultation, it was determined that Turgot, the prior, with nine associates, should open the tomb in the silence of the night, and make a faithful report concerning the state of its contents.

[1] See Bede, Hist. l. iv. c. 30. Vit. S. Cuth. c. xlii.

As soon as their brethren were retired to rest, the ten visitors entered the church. After a short but fervent prayer that God would pardon their temerity, they removed the masonry of the tomb, and beheld a large and ponderous chest, which had been entirely covered with leather, and strongly secured with nails and plates of iron. To separate the top from the sides, required their utmost exertions; and within it they discovered a second chest, of dimensions more proportionate to the human body. It was of black oak, carved with figures of animals and flowers, and wrapped in a coarse linen cloth, which had previously been dipped in melted wax to exclude the air and the damp. That it contained the object of their search, all were agreed; but their fears caused a temporary suspension of their labour. From the tradition of their predecessors they had learned, that no man ever presumed to disturb the repose of the saint and escaped the instantaneous vengeance of Heaven. The stories of ancient times crowded on their imaginations: engaged in a similar attempt, they expected to meet each moment with a similar punishment; the silence of the night, the sacredness of the place, their veneration for their patron, aided these impressions, and at last an almost general wish was expressed to abandon so hazardous an experiment. But Turgot was inflexible. He commanded them to proceed; and, after a short struggle, the duty of obedience subdued the reluctance of terror. By his direction they conveyed the smaller chest from behind the altar, to a more convenient place in the middle of the choir; unrolled the cloth; and with trembling hands forced open the lid. Instead of the

remains of the saint, they found a copy of the gospels, lying on a second lid, which had not been fastened with nails, but rested on three transverse bars of wood. By the help of two iron rings, fixed at the extremities, it was easily removed; and disclosed the body, apparently entire, lying on its right side on a pallet of silk. At the sight, they gazed on each other in silent astonishment; and then, retiring a few paces, fell prostrate on the floor, and repeated in a low tone the seven psalms known by the name of the Penitential Psalms. After this preparation they approached the coffin, and three of them, by order of the prior, placing their hands under the head, the feet, and the middle of the body, raised it up, and laid it on a carpet spread on the floor. It was found to have been wrapped in a cerecloth of linen, probably the same which the saint had received from the abbess Verca, and had carefully preserved for that purpose.[1] Over this appeared the usual episcopal vestments, the amice, alb, stole, fanon, tunic, and dalmatic; the chasuble alone was wanting, which had been removed at the former translation in 689.[2] On the forehead lay a thin plate of gold or metal gilt, thickly incrusted with small stones: and a mitre covered the head, round which had been wound a napkin of a purple colour. A cerecloth of the finest linen adhered so closely to the face, that no part of it could be loosened; but between the neck and the shoulders the skin was exposed to the sight and touch. The arms could be moved with ease: the hands were joined over the lower part of the chest, and the fingers,

[1] Bed. Vit. S. Cuth. c. 37. [2] Ibid. c. 42.

which were still flexible, pointed upwards. With the body were found a chalice and patine, a portable altar,[1] a burse to hold the linen for the altar, and an ivory comb with scissors of silver. In addition, the coffin contained, in a separate mass, a collection of bones, the mortal remains of other bishops, which, to facilitate the conveyance, the monks had deposited in the same chest when they were compelled to leave their ancient monastery. These they collected, and tranferred to a different part of the church; and, as the hour of matins approached, hastily replaced the body in the coffin, and carried it back to its former situation behind the altar.

The following day was spent in secret preparation for the work of the evening. At dusk the same individuals repaired to the church, taking with them a loose bottom of oak to be placed within the coffin, because the spot where the other relics had lain was damp and discoloured.[2] On this, without the removal of any part of the episcopal garments, and with the addition of a new winding-sheet of silk, they replaced the body in its former posture: to it they added the

[1] This portable altar was found at the opening of the coffin in 1827, of oak covered with a plate of silver, on which is inscribed, "In honorem S. Petri," the saint to whom the church of Lindisfarne was consecrated. A similar altar made of two pieces of wood, fastened with silver clasps, and bearing the inscription "Alme Trinitate, agie, sophie, Sancte Marie," was found in the tomb of Acca, bishop of Hexham, when it was opened, about the year 1000.—Sim. Dun. p. 101.

[2] This remark appears to explain the cause why the saint was laid on his side and not on his back. Probably he had been so placed, when the monks left Lindisfarne, to make room for the other relics. The following is the process by which the new bottom was impregnated with melted wax: Tabulam lingeam componunt, quam de mane usque ad vesperam secus torridos ignes calefactam liquentibus ceris inficiunt, et, quantum possibile erat, eam tali liquoris dulcedine infuderunt.—Reginald, p. 85.

reputed head of St. Oswald; and having deposited the coffin once more within the shrine, hastened to impart the result of the investigation to their anxious and impatient brethren.

The next morning the monks announced the discovery of the preceding night, and a solemn act of thanksgiving was performed to publish their triumph, and silence the doubts of the incredulous. But their joy was soon interrupted by the rational scepticism of the abbot of a neighbouring monastery. Why, he asked, was the darkness of the night selected as the most proper time to visit the tomb? Why were none but the monks of Durham permitted to be present? These circumstances provoked suspicion. Let them open the coffin before the eyes of the strangers who had come to assist at the translation of the relics. To grant this, would at once confound their adversaries; to refuse it, would be to condemn themselves of imposture and falsehood. This unexpected demand, with the insinuations by which it was accompanied, roused the indignation of the monks. They appealed to their character, which had been hitherto unimpeached; they offered to confirm their testimony with their oaths; they accused their opponents of a design to undermine their reputation, and then to seize on their property. The altercation continued till the day appointed for the ceremony of the translation, when the abbot of Seez prevailed on the prior Turgot to accede to so reasonable a demand. To the number of fifty they entered the choir; the chest which inclosed the remains was placed before them, and the lid was removed; when Turgot stepped forward, and, stretching

out his hand, forbad any person to touch the body without his permission, and commanded his monks to watch with jealousy the execution of his orders. The abbot of Seez, with Algar for his assistant, then approached, raised up the body, and proved the flexibility of the joints, by moving the head, the arms, and the legs. At the sight every doubt vanished; the most incredulous confessed that they were satisfied; the Te Deum was chanted; and the translation of the relics was immediately performed with the accustomed ceremonies.[1]

[1] Translat. S. Cuth. in Act. SS. Bened. sæc. iv. tom. 2, p. 294; and Reginald Dun. c. xl—xliii. Nobis, says the historian Simeon, speaking of this translation, incorruptum corpus ejus, quadringentesimo et octavo decimo dormitionis ejus anno, quamvis indignis divina gratia videre et manibus quoque contrectare donavit.—(Hist. Eccl. Dunel. p. 53.) There is no reason to believe that after this translation in 1104 any attempt was made to explore the state of the body before the visitation of the commissioners in the reign of Henry VIII. The shrine was despoiled and destroyed by them in 1537: and the coffin was then brought from the feretory and deposited in the vestry, where it was opened, and the body was found to be apparently entire, with the exception of the cartilage at the tip of the nose, which had fallen away. In 1540 the monks were superseded by a dean and chapter of secular canons, by whose orders, in the beginning of 1542, the old coffin was inclosed in a new one, and then deposited in a vault under the very spot where the shrine had formerly stood. Almost 300 years afterwards, on the 17th of May, 1827, this vault was privately opened by the Rev. Wm. Darnell, prebendary of the sixth stall, and the Rev. James Raine, the rector of Meldon. The upper course of masonry at the foot of the vault was composed of loose stones, a proof that an entry had already been made once at least since its construction. Within was found a large coffin of oak in a state of great decay, the lid of which was loose, and bent up on the sides like a trough: and within this another coffin in still greater decay, the mouldering remains of which covered with dust and fragments the original contents. When these, with a skull and a number of bones, were cleared away, the fragments of a third coffin were found; and beneath them another skull, and the disjointed bones of a human skeleton at the bottom of all. The question is, were these last the bones of the sainted bishop of Lindisfarne?

There is a tradition, to which formerly much credit was paid, that the monks before their ejection had substituted, by way of precaution, the body of some other person for that of St. Cuthbert, and had buried

the latter in a distant part of the church ; and the English Benedictine monks still preserve with secrecy an ancient plan of the building, in which the spot supposed to be the present resting-place of the body is distinctly marked. Now it should be observed, 1st, that this tradition cannot be correct, as far as it concerns the monks ; for they were ejected in 1540, and the vault was not built before 1542. If then any removal of the body took place, it must have been while the Catholic secular canons were in possession from that time till the reign of Elizabeth. 2nd, in 1104, there were inclosed in the coffin a small plate of gold lying on the forehead (such plates were worn in imitation of that worn by St. John the Evangelist, Euseb. Hist. l. iii. c. 31 ; l. v. c. 24), a chalice, a patene, and a pair of silver scissors. These were articles of value, and their absence from the coffin in the vault may be explained on the supposition that they were purloined, when the shrine was rifled by the commissioners. With them were also inclosed the reputed skull of St. Oswald, a burse, a small portable altar, and a comb : and all these, of little value, were still found in the coffin. Their presence seems to prove that this was at least the original coffin, and to make it highly improbable that the remains of the saint were ever removed from it.

But then many things were found in the coffin which certainly were not there in 1104, such as the first skull and the bones already mentioned, a very valuable stole and two maniples, and a pectoral cross of gold weighing fifteen pennyweights and twelve grains. To me it seems probable that they were placed there by the Catholic prebendaries, who, aware of their approaching ejection in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, introduced into the tomb, as a place of security, the other relics of the church, and the most valuable articles belonging to the feretory. The reader will recollect that the vault had already been entered at least once before it was opened in 1827.

CHAPTER X.

RELIGIOUS PRACTICES.

VENERATION AND INVOCATION OF THE SAINTS—OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN—OF ST. PETER—OF SS. GREGORY AND AUGUSTINE—OF ANGLO-SAXON SAINTS — RELICS — MIRACLES — STATUES AND PAINTINGS—WORSHIP OF THE CROSS—COLLECTIONS OF PAINTINGS—ICONOCLASM —DEUTERO-NICENE COUNCIL—NOT REJECTED BY THE ENGLISH CHURCH —PILGRIMAGES TO JERUSALEM AND ROME—TRAVELS OF WILLIBALD AND OTHERS—ORDEALS.

The invocation of the saints is a religious practice which may be traced back to the purest ages of Christianity. The first proselytes to the gospel were wont to revolve with pride and exultation the virtues, the sufferings, and the heroism of their apostles. To celebrate their memory, was to celebrate the triumph of religion; hymns were composed, churches dedicated, and festivals established in their honour. From the veneration of their virtues the transition was easy to the invocation of their patronage. When the pious Christian, in the fervour of devotion, cast an eye towards his heavenly country, he beheld it inhabited by men whose lot it had been, during their pilgrimage on earth, to struggle like himself with the difficulties of life. They were still his brethren; could they be indifferent to his welfare? They were the favourites of God; could God refuse to grant their petitions?[1] Such was the reasoning of ancient piety,—that reasoning was justified by the tes-

[1] S. Hieron. adver. Vigil. tom. ii. p. 159. Colon. 1616.

timony of the inspired writings,—and throughout the whole Christian Church, from the western coast of Ireland to the distant mountains of Persia, the faithful confidently solicited the patronage and intercession of the saints.[1]

This practice the Anglo-Saxons received at the same time with the rudiments of the Christian religion. It formed an integral part of their public and private worship. In public they were frequently called upon to celebrate the anniversaries of individual saints, and yearly to keep the festival of All-hallows, as a solemnity of the first rank and importance.[2] In private, at their morning and evening devotions, they were instructed, as the reader has seen already, to worship God, and then "to pray first to St. Mary, and the holy apostles, and the holy martyrs, and all God's saints, that they would intercede for them to God."[3] Hence they learned to look up to the saints in heaven with feelings of confidence and affection, to consider them as friends and protectors, and to implore their aid in the hour of distress, with the hope that God would grant to the prayer of the patron what he might otherwise refuse to the petition of the supplicant.[4] An ingenious distinction

[1] Consult Du Pin, cent. iii. p. 182.

[2] It has been said that there is no mention of this festival before the year 830 or 835; but Alcuin dates a letter to Arno, archbishop of Saltzburgh, on the festival itself, adding: hanc solemnitatem sanctissimam tribus diebus jejunando, orando, missas canendo, et eleemosynas dando pro invicem sincera devotione præcedamus.—(Alc. Oper. 1, ep. lxxvi. p. 112.) Now, as Alcuin died in 804, I have no doubt that it is much more ancient than the time of Alcuin. It is found not only in Beda's martyrology, but also in the very ancient martyrology in verse, in his works, p. 53.

[3] See Chap. VII. p. 316, and Thorpe, ii. p. 426.

[4] Horum animas in conspectu summi Pastoris et Redemptoris nostri

has, indeed, been made between prayer to God for the benefit of the saints' intercession, and prayer to the saints themselves for it; and it has been asserted that though the former was common, the latter was unknown among our forefathers.[1] This notion is probably based on the language to be found in the collects and the canon of the mass, which, however, are forms of prayer and worship addressed to God alone, and cannot therefore contain any direct invocation of the creature.[2] But that in addition to the invocation of the Deity the Anglo-Saxons solicited expressly the intercession of the saints from the saints themselves, is evident from the whole tenour of Saxon history. Besides the instructions for private prayer just mentioned, Archbishop Theodore bears witness to the practice in his time, where he notices the difference of the language in the litany, when the petition is addressed to our blessed Lord and when it is addressed to the saints; to the former we say, "Christ, hear us; Son of God, we beseech thee, hear us;" but to the saints we do not say, "Hear us,"

æternis gaudiis semper assistere credamus, et inde nostris favere precibus.—(Alc. Oper. 1, ep. vi. p. 10.) The monks of Wearmouth, in their letter to Gregory III. about their abbot Ceolfrith, speak thus of their confidence in his patronage: Scientes pro certo quia, etsi vos corpus habetis ipsius, et nos tamen et vos Deo devotum ejus spiritum, sive in corpore manentem, seu carneis vinculis absolutum, magnum pro nostris excessibus apud supernam pietatem intercessorem habemus et patronum.—Bed. Oper. Min. p. 160.

[1] See Mr. Soames, Bampton Lectures, pp. 216, 218.

[2] Thus in the Proprium sanctorum in the Durham Ritual a collect for St. Stephen runs—"Tribue, quæsumus, ut pro nobis intercessor existat, qui pro suis etiam persecutoribus exoravit Dominum," &c.: One for St. John—"Beati evangelistæ Joannis, quæsumus Domine, precibus adjuvemur," &c.: One for the holy Innocents—"Ipsi nobis, quæsumus Domine, postulent mentium puritatem, quorum innocentiam hodie celebramus," &c.—Rit. Dunel. pp. 44, 46, 48.

but, "St. Mary, pray for us; St. Peter, pray for us."[1] The same is witnessed by Beda, who concludes his sermon on the Baptist with these words:—"It is right that on this his festival we seek *his* help to our prayers, who was to us the herald of salvation. Let us then solicit him to obtain for us by his intercession, that we may come to that Saviour to whom he bore testimony, &c."[2] To this may be added the evidence of Alcuin, in his litany for every day in the week,[3] and in his sermon on St. Willibrord, whom he addresses thus:—"O blessed priest of Christ, do not abandon us who labour here on earth, but assist us continually by thy prayers from heaven. While thou wast among men, thy life was pleasing to God; let thy prayers, now that thou art with God, be directed to the profit of men. Let us, who celebrate thy festival, experience the aid of thy intercession."[4] The homilist Ælfric, at a much later period, agrees perfectly with his predecessors:—"Let us now,"—so he ends his sermon on the Annunciation,—"pray the blessed and happy Virgin Mary, that she intercede for us to her own Son and Creator Jesus Christ, who, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, governs all things, ever to eternity. Amen."[5]

Among the saints on whom the Anglo-Saxons looked

[1] Imprimis dicitur, "Christe, audi nos," ac deinde "Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis:" neque dicitur, "Christe, ora pro nobis," et "Sancta Maria, vel Sancte Petre, audi nos," sed "Christe, audi nos," et "Fili Dei, te rogamus audi nos."—Theod. Pœnitent. Thorpe, ii. p. 57.

[2] Bed. Homil. p. 243.

[3] Sancta Maria, ora pro nobis. Sancta Maria, intercede pro me peccatore. Sancta Maria, adjuva me in hora exitus mei ex hac præsenti vita.—Officia per Ferias, Op. ii. p. 62.

[4] Alc. Oper. 11, p. 195.

[5] Ælfric's Homilies by Mr. Thorpe, 1, 205.

with peculiar veneration, a high pre-eminence was allotted to the "most blessed mother of God, the perpetual Virgin St. Mary."[1] That her influence with her Son was unequalled by that of any other creature, was justly inferred from her maternal dignity; and the honours paid to her memory had been already sanctioned by her own prediction.[2] Her praises were the themes of the Saxon poets;[3] hymns in her honour, the same which are still retained in the Roman Breviary, were chanted in the public service; churches and altars were dedicated under her patronage,[4] miraculous cures were ascribed to her intercession,[5] and the principal incidents of her mortal life were kept in constant remembrance by four yearly solemnities, in honour of her nativity, of the annunciation, of her purification, and her assumption.

The next in rank to St. Mary was St. Peter. Him Christ had chosen for the leader of the apostles: to him he had given the keys of the kingdom of heaven, "with the chief exercise of judicial power in the Church: to the end that all the faithful throughout the world might know, that whoever should separate

[1] Beatissima Dei genitrix et perpetua virgo.—Bed. Homil. in Purific. p. 173.

[2] Luke i. 48.

[3] In the Saxon language, in the Exeter MS.; in Latin, among the poems of St. Aldhelm in Bib. Pat. viii. p. 14, and the smaller poems of Alcuin, tom. ii. pp. 208-226.

[4] Insuper absidam consecrat virginis ara:
Præsentem ergo diem cuncti celebremus ovantes.
Istam namque diem, qua templi festa coruscant,
Nativitate sua sacravit virgo Maria.
Anno 680 *apud Alc.* 11, p. 549.

[5] Per intercessionem beatæ suæ genitricis semperque virginis Mariæ.—Bed. l. v. c. 19, p. 389. Edd. Vit. Wilf. c. liv. p. 83. Ælf. Hom. 1, 448.

himself from the unity of Peter's faith or of Peter's fellowship, that man could never obtain absolution from the bonds of sin, nor admission through the gates of the heavenly kingdom."[1] Hence all, both laity and clergy, were solicitous to secure his patronage. They crowded to the churches and altars dedicated to his memory;[2] pilgrimages were made to his tomb; and presents were annually sent to the church in which were deposited his remains, and to the bishop who sat in his chair. Among the other saints, particular honours were paid to Pope Gregory and Archbishop Augustine, as the friends and patrons of the nation. To the zeal of the former, and the labours of the latter, the Anglo-Saxons were chiefly indebted for their knowledge of Christianity. They called Gregory "their foster-father in Christ," and themselves "his foster-children in baptism;" and Augustine was "the first to bring to them the doctrine of faith, the sacrament of baptism, and the knowledge of their heavenly country."[3] Gratitude taught them to revere the memory of the two prelates from whom they had received these benefits: both, during life, had given strong proofs of their affection for the Anglo-Saxons; it could not be that that affection would cease by their translation

[1] Specialiter claves regni cœlorum et principatum judiciariæ potestatis accepit, ut omnes per orbem credentes intelligant, quia quicumque ab unitate fidei vel societatis illius quolibet modo semetipsos segregent, tales nec vinculis peccatorum absolvi, nec januam possint regni cœlestis ingredi.—Bed. Hom. p. 199.

[2] Of the first Anglo-Saxon churches, the greater part were dedicated in honour of St. Peter.—(Bed. l. ii. c. 14; iii. c. 6, 17; iv. c. 3, 18; v. c. 1, 17.) His festival was a day of general communion—mid ȝeþýnum.—Martyr. apud Wanley, p. 110.

[3] Cot. MS. Jul. x. f. 71.

to a better world. Hence they were considered and honoured as the patrons of the whole people, and the aid of their intercession was confidently invoked.[1] In like manner each separate nation, prompted by gratitude and hope, revered the memory of its apostle; and the bishops Aidan, Birinus, and Felix were severally venerated as the protectors of the countries which had been the theatres of their piety, their labours, and their success.

From saints of foreign extraction, the Anglo-Saxons were soon encouraged to extend their devotion to men who had been born and educated among them. Of the converts, many had deeply imbibed the spirit, and faithfully practised the precepts of the gospel. To that ferocity which formerly marked their character, had succeeded the virtues of meekness, humility, and patience; the licentiousness of desire they had learned to repress by the mortification of the passions, and their labours in propagating the doctrines of Christianity had been pushed with the zeal and perseverance which formed a striking feature in the national character. Their contemporaries applauded the virtues which they had not the resolution to imitate; and the preternatural cures which were believed to have been wrought

[1] At the synod of Cloveshoe, in 747, it was ordered that the festival of St. Gregory should be kept on the 12th of March, that of St. Augustine on the 26th of May.—(Wilk. Con. 1, 97.) Very shortly afterwards, in a synod the name of which is not mentioned, a third patron was selected, Boniface, a countryman, the martyred bishop of Mentz. In generali synodo nostra ejus diem natalitii statuimus annua frequentatione solemniter celebrare: utpote quem specialiter nobis cum beato Gregorio et Augustino et patronum quærimus, et habere indubitanter credimus coram Christo Domino.—(Epist. Cuthb. ad Lullum inter Bonifacianas, ep. lxx. p. 94.) Archbishop Cuthbert died about 758.

at their tombs, augmented their reputation. By the voice of the public, and the authority of the bishops, they received the honours of sanctity;[1] the respect which their countrymen paid to their virtues was quickly imitated by foreign nations; and England was distinguished with the flattering title of the Island of Saints.

Here I may be allowed to notice the injustice with which the memory of these men has frequently been treated; and that for no other reason, as it appears to me, than because the epithet of saint was usually prefixed to their names. Their reputation had survived the shock of the Norman revolution. The victors joined with the vanquished in praising and honouring their sanctity. But since the Reformation it has been discovered that the Anglo-Saxon saints lived in an age when men were incapable of distinguishing between vice and virtue, insanity and devotion; and that they were in fact no better than fanatics, who owed their canonization to the ignorance of the age, or profligates, who by their benefactions had purchased that honour from the policy or the gratitude of the monks.[2] Now

[1] During the period of which I am writing, the power of canonizing saints was exercised by the provincial bishops and national councils. The first instance of a solemn canonization by the Pope (the opposite arguments of Benedict XIV. do not appear convincing,—De Canon. l. i. c. 7) occurs in the year 993, when John XV., after a diligent inquiry into the life and virtues of Ulric, bishop of Augsburg, enrolled him among the saints.—(Bullar. tom. i. p. 44.) It was not, however, till the beginning of the twelfth century that the privilege of canonization was reserved to the Roman see, by Alexander III.—(Bull. tom. i. p. 67.) From that period to the accession of Clement XIII. in 1758, one hundred and fifteen persons had been solemnly canonized. See the catalogue in Sandini, Vit. Pontif. vol. ii. p. 760.

[2] See Sturges, Reflections, pp. 7, 27, 31; Rapin, Hist. vol. i. pp. 80, 116.

of fanaticism we are accustomed to judge from the notions which we have previously imbibed. With different persons the term assumes different significations, and what to one seems the pure doctrine of the gospel, by another is deemed folly and superstition.[1] But to appreciate the merit of those whom the Anglo-Saxons revered as saints, we should review their sentiments and their conduct. The former may be learned from their private correspondence, the latter from the narratives of contemporary historians. Their letters (of which some hundreds are extant)[2] uniformly breathe a spirit of charity, meekness, and zeal; a determined opposition to the most fashionable vices, and an earnest desire of securing by their virtue the favour of Heaven. Of their conduct, the general tendency was to soften the ferocity of their countrymen, to introduce the knowledge of the more useful arts, to strengthen by religious motives the peace of society, to dispel the darkness of paganism, and to diffuse the pure light of the gospel. If this be fanaticism, the Anglo-Saxon saints must abandon their defence, and plead guilty.

[1] It is probably to their austerities that the charge of fanaticism is attached. But they must share the reproach with the first Christians, whom they endeavoured to follow in the path of mortification, though at a considerable distance. To excuse their inferiority they were accustomed to allege the severity of a northern climate, which was incompatible with a life of rigorous abstinence. Ðæt eaþð mon eac eallep þa mæȝenþæpc hep on uteapdan þæne eopþan bpaðnyppe. þa þa heo ip to mibbep on mæȝenþæptum eapdum. þæp man mæȝ þæptan þpeopliconp þonne hep.—Homil. 34, apud Whel. p. 228. See also Bæda, Vit. S. Cuthb. c. vi.

[2] Those of St. Boniface and his correspondents are published by Serrarius (Ep. S. Bonif. Moguntiæ, 1629), and Martene (Thesaur. Anecdot. tom. ix.); of Beda, in different parts of his works; and of Alcuin, by Duchesne (Oper. Alc. par. iii.), Canisius (Ant. Lect. tom. ii.), Mabillon (Annal. Vet. p. 398), and Frobin (Oper. Alc. i. pp. 4, 297). See also Leland's Collectanea, vol. i. p. 392.

Their adversaries, however, have not been content with stripping them of their virtues, they have even accused them of several vices. But the very arguments by which the charge has been supported furnish the fairest evidence of their merit. Though the records of antiquity have been searched with the keen eye of criticism and suspicion, curiosity has been defeated; and no fact has hitherto been adduced which, in its natural shape, can impeach the purity of their morals.[1] They have passed through the ordeal without a stain; and their innocence has compelled their calumniators to descend to the unworthy artifice of imputing virtuous conduct to vicious motives, and of describing every Saxon whose piety excited admiration, as indebted for his reputation to his hypocrisy. But the reader will pause before he assent to so unfounded an inference. This hypocrisy was invisible to the contemporaries of those to whom it is objected; and we may rationally suspect the mysteries of an art which professes at the present day to unfold the views and motives of men whose ashes have been, for more than ten centuries, mingled with the dust.

It has been said that the honours of sanctity were bestowed without discrimination on the benefactors of monasteries, as a lure to attract the donations of opulence and credulity. But to search in the Anglo-Saxon menology for the most distinguished patrons of the monastic profession, will prove a fruitless labour.

[1] I trust I shall not be referred to Henry's story of the award by Edward the Confessor (Henry, vol. iv. p. 344), or Mr. Turner's romantic history of St. Dunstan (Turn. vol. iii. p. 140). The former is a mistake (see Gale, Hist. Rames. c. 113, p. 456); the latter will be noticed in one of the following chapters.

Neither Ine, nor Offa, nor Ethelwold, nor Alfred,[1] were ever enrolled in the calendar: even Edgar, though more than forty monasteries owed their existence to his favour and liberality, was left in the crowd of uncanonized benefactors. His virtues, indeed, they praised; but they were not blind to his vices; and both have been transmitted, by the impartiality of their historians, to the knowledge of posterity. In the Saxon Chronicle may be seen his character, portrayed by the pencil of a monk, his contemporary. With fidelity he describes the faults as well as the virtues of his patron, and concludes with a wish that does honour to his gratitude and sincerity:—"God grant," he exclaims, "that his good deeds overbalance his evil deeds, to shield his soul at the last day."[2]

2. "The festivals of the saints," observes an Anglo-Saxon manuscript, "are established, that we may obtain the benefit of their prayers, and be excited to the imitation of their virtues."[3] These were the great objects of the veneration which our ancestors paid to departed sanctity. At the present day, to offer any species of religious honour to a created being, is with many a deadly act of idolatry. When they contemplate the Saxon invoking the patronage of the saints,

[1] Voltaire (Hist. Générale, vol. i. p. 214) asserts that to Alfred was refused the honour of canonization, because he had founded no monastery. The fact, however, is, that he built the abbey of Athelney for monks, and that of Shaftesbury for nuns, and annually made numerous and valuable donations to different churches. (See Spelman's Life of Alfred, edit. Hearne, pp. 164—171.)

[2] Lob hum ȝeunne þ hiꝛ ȝobe dæda ꝛþýþꝑa peaꝑþan þonne miꝛdæda. hiꝛ ꝛaꝑle to ȝeꝛcýlðneꝛꝛe on lanȝꝛuman ꝛýðe.—Chron. Sax. p. 116.

[3] Festivitates sanctorum institutæ sunt, vel ad excitandam imitationem, vel ut meritis eorum consociemur, atque orationibus adjuvemur. —MS. C. C. C. C. S. 18, apud Wanley, p. 148. See note (E).

their piety is, or affects to be, alarmed; and they exclaim, in the language of horror and indignation, that the worship of the Deity is supplanted by the worship of his creatures.[1] But a short acquaintance with the literature of the time will prove that our ancestors were too well instructed to confound man with God. They knew how to discriminate between the adoration due to the Supreme Being and the honours which might be claimed by the most holy among his servants; and while they worshipped him as the author of every blessing, they paid no other respect to them, than what was owing to men, whom they considered as *his* favourites and *their* advocates. Whoever shall attentively peruse the works of the Saxon writers, or the acts of the Saxon councils, from the era of their conversion to what is deemed the darkest period of their history, will observe this important distinction accurately marked, and constantly inculcated. When the poet sang the praise of his patron, he sought neither to interest his mercy, nor to deprecate his justice; to obtain the assistance of his intercession, to be remembered by him at the throne of the Almighty, was the sole object of his petition.[2] If the preacher from the pulpit exhorted his hearers to solicit the prayers of their more holy brethren, he

[1] Hume, Hist. c. i. p. 42.

[2] See Alcuin's address to the Virgin Mary :—

Tu mundi vitam, totis tu gaudia sæclis,
Tu Regem cœli, tu Dominum atque Deum
Ventris in hospitio genuisti, virgo perennis,
Tu nobis precibus auxiliare tuis.
Alcuin. apud Can. tom. ii. par. ii. p. 471.

—Also St. Aldhelm, de Virgin. Bib. Pat. tom. viii. p. 22, and Beda, Vit. S. Cuthb. p. 291.

was careful to inculcate, that they should adore God alone, as their true Lord and true God.[1] If the Christian, when he rose from his bed, was accustomed to beg the protection of the saints, he was yet commanded, in the first place, to worship with bended knees the majesty of his Creator. These distinctions were too easy to be mistaken. The idea of intercession necessarily includes that of dependence; and to employ the mediation of his favourites, is to acknowledge the superior excellence of the Deity.[2]

3. With the invocation of the saints is naturally connected the veneration of their remains. The man who had been taught to respect their virtues, and to implore their patronage, would not hesitate to honour their ashes with a decent monument, and with a distinguished place in the assembly of the faithful. In the book of the Apocalypse, the martyrs are represented as reposing beneath the altar;[3] and before the death of its author, we behold the Christians of Rome offering the sacred mysteries on the tombs of the holy apostles Peter and Paul.[4] When the martyr Ignatius had been

[1] The Saxon homilist is very accurate in his expressions:—To him anum þe ꝥceolan uꝛ ȝebiddan. he ana ıꝛ ꝥoþ hlaforð ⁊ ꝥoþ Loð. þe biddaþ þingunga æt halgum mannum þ hi ꝥceolan uꝛ þingian to heopa dryhtne ⁊ to uꝛum dryhtne. Ne ȝebidde þe na ðeah hꝑæþere uꝛ to him ꝥꝑa ꝥꝑa þe to Lode doþ.—"Him alone shall we adore. He alone is true Lord and true God. We beg the intercession of holy men, that they would intercede for us to their Lord and our Lord. But nevertheless we do not pray to them as we do to God."—(Homil. Sax. apud Whel. p. 283.) "Nulli martyrum," says the same MS., quoting a passage from St. Augustine, "sacrificamus, quamvis in memoriis martyrum constituamus altaria."—Ibid.

[2] Solam Trinitatem adorare debemus, sanctos vero intercessores pro peccatis nostris quærere.—Thorpe, ii. 57.

[3] Rev. iv. 9.

[4] See in St. Cyril (cont. Julian. pp. 327, 334) the testimony of the emperor Julian, which must outweigh the authority of those modern

devoured by the wild beasts of the amphitheatre, the fragments of his bones were collected by his disciples, and carefully conveyed to the capital of the East, where the Christians received them as an invaluable treasure, and deposited them with honour in the place appropriated to the divine worship.[1] Succeeding generations inherited the sentiments of their fathers; the veneration of relics was diffused as far as the knowledge of the gospel; and their presence was universally deemed requisite for the canonical dedication of a church or an altar.[2] With this view Gregory the Great, as soon as he heard of the success of the missionaries, was careful to send to them a supply of relics;[3] and scarcely a pilgrim returned from Gaul or Italy, who had not procured, by entreaty or purchase, a portion of the remains, or reputed remains, of some saint or martyr. But the poverty of the Saxon church was soon relieved by the virtues of her children; and England became a soil fertile in saints. Scarcely was there a monastery that did not possess one or more of these favourites of Heaven: their bodies lay richly

writers who date the veneration of relics from the commencement of the fourth century.

[1] *Θησαυρὸς ἀτίμητος.*—(Act. S. Ignat. c. v. apud Ruinart, Act. Mart. p. 707.) Compare this passage with that in the Acts of St. Polycarp:—*Ὅστᾶ αὐτοῦ τιμιώτερα λιθων πολυτελῶν καὶ δοκιμώτερα ὑπὲρ χρυσίον.*—Act. c. xviii.

[2] Bed. l. v. c. 12. Wilk. Con. p. 169.

[3] Hence we are informed by Carte, that the veneration of relics was introduced into England by the Roman missionaries, but was unknown to the Scottish bishops Aidan, Finan, and Colman.—(Carte, Hist. vol. i. p. 241.) Yet Finan ordered the bones of his holy predecessor to be taken out of his tomb, and placed on the right side of the altar, juxta venerationem tanto pontifice dignam (Bed. l. iii. c. 17); and Colman, at his departure, carried with him into Scotland a part of the relics of the same saint.—(Bed. l. iii. c. 26.) See also Beda on St. Oswald, l. iii. c. 11, 12.

entombed in the vicinity of the principal altar; and around were suspended the votive offerings of the multitudes who believed that they had experienced the efficacy of their intercession. In the hour of distress or danger, the afflicted votary threw himself at the foot of the shrine with an avowal of his own unworthiness, accompanied with an humble petition that God would nevertheless grant the favour which he asked in consideration of his patron.[1] The petition was occasionally followed by a favourable result; the report drew crowds of new applicants to the spot; and the clergy of each celebrated church could point to a long list of preternatural cures, believed to have been wrought at the shrines of the saints whose bodies lay entombed within their precincts.

The reader of the present day, who assumes without inquiry that miracles must have ceased with the age of the apostles, will be tempted to smile or wonder at the simplicity and credulity of these men. But he should remember that this belief was not peculiar to the Anglo-Saxons, nor to the kindred tribes of the North lately brought within the pale of Christianity; it was common to every Christian church on the face of the earth,—to the churches in the East as well as the West, to those of more ancient as well as of more recent origin: all equally believed in the continued recurrence of miracles; all frequently attributed them to the intercession of the saints whose aid had been implored.

[1] Quasi viventem allocuta rogavit, ut apud misericordiam pii conditoris impetraret se a tantis tamque diutinis cruciatibus absolvi. —(Bed. l. iv. c. 9.) Prosternens se ad corpus viri Dei pia intentione per ejus auxilium Dominum sibi propitium fieri precabatur.—Id. iv. c. 31.

Nor does there appear anything very surprising in this general persuasion. It naturally grew out of their common belief in the Christian religion. For the Bible is a record of miracles and mysteries: it requires of the believer not only to give his assent to doctrines far above his comprehension, but also to admit the existence of events inexplicable by the known laws of nature. When the convert from paganism read, or was told, of the wonders wrought by the Almighty in favour of the children of Israel, he could not fail to infer that God would work similar wonders in favour of those whom he had called to be his favourite people in the place of the children of Israel; when he became acquainted with the miracles of our blessed Lord here upon earth, and with his promise that the believers in him should, after his departure, "do the same works, or even greater works than he had done,"[1] the new Christian would naturally infer that this promise would be accomplished in his time, as it had been accomplished in former ages. He saw that heavenly favours had been granted to the Jews for the sake of their fathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; how could he doubt that similar favours would be granted to Christians in consideration of their brethren, who had faithfully observed the law, or shed their blood in the cause of God? The body of the dead man, as soon as it touched the bones of the Jewish prophet Elisha, revived;[2] why should not similar efficacy be granted to the bones of the Christian saints and martyrs? From such reasoning as this the converted nations were led

[1] John xiv. 12.
[2] 2 or 4 Kings xiii. 21. See also Acts v. 15; xix. 12.

to expect the renewal among themselves of the prodigies recorded in the Scripture; nor were they, if we may believe the testimony of contemporary writers, disappointed in this expectation.

Such, then, was the general persuasion of the Christian world at the time when Christianity was first preached to our ancestors; and such the persuasion of their teachers, from whatever quarter they came, whether from the nations on the continent, or from the isle of Iona. They not only related to their hearers the wonders which had been wrought in other countries and in other ages, but were soon enabled to appeal to the wonders which were wrought here by their own agency. The reader is already acquainted with the admonition given by Gregory to his disciples, to be on their guard against the suggestions of vanity, and to remember that these supernatural gifts had been granted to them not to honour their merit, but to promote the efficacy of their mission. Of the facts themselves it is plain that he entertained no doubt. He compared them to the signs and prodigies which had accompanied the preaching of the apostles,[1] and it will be no easy matter to show why he should not. The cases were parallel. In each the object was the same—the conversion of an unbelieving people to the faith of Christ.[2] Nor did

[1] See vol. i. chap. i. p. 38. Tantis miraculis vel ipse vel hi qui cum ipso transmissi sunt, in gente eadem coruscant, ut apostolorum virtutes in signis, quæ perhibent, imitari videantur.—S. Greg. Epist. l. vii. epist. 30.

[2] This fact has greatly perplexed the scepticism of Dr. Enfield. That both Gregory and Augustine attributed the success of the mission to the impression caused by the miracles, he admits; that any miracles had been performed, he confidently denies. In the search of expedients to reconcile these two assertions, he dances from one unsatisfactory hypothesis to another, till at length he rests, but with

the Anglo-Saxons conceive that this gift of miracles ceased with the labours of their first apostles. They claimed it for the saints of each succeeding generation; and we find the Saxon homilist, the celebrated Ælfric, in his sermon "On Catholic Faith," boldly asserting that preternatural cures continued to be wrought at the tombs of holy men, even in his time, the beginning of the eleventh century: "Christ," he says, "healed in person the deaf and the dumb, the halt and the blind, the mad and the leprous, and raised the dead to life; afterwards he wrought the same miracles by the apostles and other holy men; now also, in our times, everywhere where holy men rest, God worketh many miracles at their dead bones, because he will with these miracles confirm the people's faith."[1]

It is evident that, with this persuasion, men would take but little pains to investigate the physical or moral causes of the events which excited their wonder and

apparent reluctance, in the notion that the pontiff and the missionary were engaged in a conspiracy to seduce the infidels from error to truth by imaginary miracles.—(Aikin's Gen. Biog. i. 474.) But then would these conspirators have been careful to conceal the real fact from each other in their confidential correspondence? Would St. Gregory have thought such miracles of sufficient importance to write an account of them to the patriarch of Alexandria? Mr. Soames has adopted a different explication. He tells us that "Jutish Kent presented a most inviting field to one possessed of the public eye, and disposed to gratify it by the assumption of miraculous endowments. Augustine was forward in gratifying his adopted countrymen. He may, indeed, occasionally have suspected a degree of truth in his pretensions. To men labouring under nervous ailments any juggling process is productive of temporary benefit; but in cases absolutely hopeless, he probably lulled his conscience under a little pious fraud, by the false and execrable maxim, that the end justifies the means.—As for Gregory, his was a mind enamoured of the marvellous; and, at all events, his politic habits readily made him patronize a wonderful tale, whenever it seemed likely to raise the dignity of his see, or advance a favourite notion."—Soames, Hist. 51, 52.

[1] Thorpe's Translation of Ælfric's Homilies, i. 293.

gratitude. With them Providence was everything; with us it is seldom thought of. The more religious among them—so it appears from their own language and correspondence—may be said literally to have "*walked with God;*" they kept him and his works constantly before their eyes; physical causes did his bidding, the wills of men were guided or controlled by him; they beheld him in every occurrence of life, and placed themselves, with submission but with confidence, under the protection of their heavenly Father, "by whom all the hairs of their head were numbered, and without whom not even a sparrow could fall to the ground."[1] Hence was generated a predisposition to invest every unexpected or wished-for event with a supernatural character, to see in it the evident handiwork of the Almighty. A dream often would be taken for a vision or a warning from heaven; a conjecture, afterwards verified by the event, be converted into a prophecy; an occurrence in conformity with the object of their prayer, be pronounced a special interposition of the Divine power; and narratives of distant and surprising cures, be admitted without inquiry, and on the mere testimony of the relaters. It cannot be denied that this remark will apply to many of the facts recorded as miracles in our ancient writers. Their previous disposition of mind has led them into error; it was, however, an error of the head, not of the heart; one which might argue a want of science and discernment, but not of religion and piety.

There was also another cause which contributed to the composition of many among those legends, which

[1] Matt. x. 30.

no one can read at the present day without a smile at the profound credulity of the writers. Men at that time lived in a state of comparative isolation; of the matters which happened around them, they could obtain no information but from the casual arrival of strangers; and the resources which the press, by the multiplication of books, now offers to the idle, had then no existence. Hence, to relieve the monotony of conversation, they received and repeated with avidity every tale which reached them; the more it interested the imagination and the feelings, the more acceptable it was to the hearers; a taste for the marvellous was generated, and traditions of long standing, as well as stories of more recent date, were often committed to writing as facts by men who, if they had learned to doubt and examine, would have considered them as fictions or exaggerations. In this respect the caution of Beda is worthy of notice. He relates several wonderful events, but not one of them on his own knowledge. To some he gives full credit on the personal authority of men whose names he mentions, and of whose veracity he can entertain no doubt; of the others he is careful to state that they come to him at third or fourth hand, or from the tradition of certain churches; and with this information he leaves them to the judgment of his readers.[1]

From the mortal remains of the saints, we pass to the honour paid to the representations of holy persons and holy things. We know that during the three first

[1] It is singular that though his life of St. Cuthbert abounds with such narratives furnished by the monks of Lindisfarne, yet his lives of the first five abbots of his own monastery contain no notice of a single miracle.

centuries of the Christian era, images and paintings were but sparingly admitted into the assemblies of the faithful; and this caution was justified by the apprehension, that the proselytes might easily revert to their former habits, and transfer their homage from the Creator to the creature.[1] But, as idolatry declined, pictures and statues met with greater indulgence; they spoke a language which was intelligible to the meanest capacity; they instructed the ignorant, and stimulated the languid; they preserved the memory of virtue, and pointed out the path which conducts to the rewards of sanctity. At the period in which Augustine attempted the conversion of England, the churches of the East and the West, the almost insulated Christians of Caledonia, no less than the immediate disciples of the Roman pontiff, had adopted this doctrine; and the Saxons, instructed by their example, hesitated not to perform their devotions before the representations of Christ and his saints. As the cross was the instrument of their redemption, it was always considered the distinguishing symbol of Christianity. A cross was borne in the front of the missionaries when they announced the doctrine of the gospel to Ethelbert;[2] a cross was erected by Oswald, the exiled king of Northumbria, and venerated by his followers, before they ventured to face the numerous and victorious host of the Britons;[3] a cross in many districts supplied the place of an oratory, and

[1] Sed illud ante omnia constituendum, imagines ex illorum per se genere esse, quæ *ἀδιάφορα* nominantur; hoc est, quæ ad substantiam ipsam religionis non attinent, sed in potestate sunt ecclesiæ, ut ea vel adhibeat vel ableget, pro eo atque satius esse decreverit.—Petav. De Incarn. l. xv. c. 13, n. 1.

[2] Bed. l. i. c. 25.

[3] Id. l. iii. c. 2.

around it the thane and his retainers assembled to perform their devotions:[1] and in every church a cross —in the richer churches, a cross covered with plates of silver, or silver gilt—standing on the altar, or suspended above it, proclaimed to the eyes of the converts the victory of Christ over the gods of their pagan forefathers.[2] To model a cross, even in the precious metals, was not beyond the skill of native artists; but paintings could be procured only from foreign countries; and one of the great objects of the more wealthy in their pilgrimages to Rome was to purchase pictures for the embellishment of their churches. Among these collectors the first place was due to Bennet Biscop. The absis of his church at Wearmouth[3] was decorated

[1] Sic mos est Saxonicæ gentis, quod in nonnullis nobilium bonorumque hominum prædiis, non ecclesiam, sed sanctæ crucis signum Deo dicatum, cum magno honore almum, in alto erectum, ad commodam diurnæ orationis sedulitatem solent habere.—(Vit. S. Willibaldi, apud Canis. Lect. Antiq. ii. par. 2, p. 107.) This custom did not cease with the erection of churches afterwards. The cross erected at Ripon is thus mentioned by Beda:—

Quin etiam sublime crucis radiante metallo
Hic posuit trophæum.

Bed. l. v. c. 19.

In fact, a cross was erected in every large monastery as a place of prayer; and forms of prayer to be said before the cross are to be found in all the ancient sacramentaries. In the old collectarium in the Durham Ritual, the first prayer is as follows:—Deus, qui unigeniti tui, Domini nostri Jesu Christi, pretioso sanguine humanum genus redimere dignatus es, concede ut qui ad adorandam vivificam crucem conveniant, a peccatorum suorum nexibus liberentur per Dom. &c.—(Durham Rit. p. 93. See also pp. 149, 150, 151.) Another collection of such prayers ad crucem may be found in Alcuin's Liber Sacramentorum, 11, 19, 20.

[2] Argenti laminis altare crucesque
Texerat auratis. *Alcuin de Pontif.* v. 1225.

Et sublime crucis vexillum erexit ad aram,
Et totum texit pretiosis valde metallis.

Id. v. 1496.

[3] As the absis faced the people, it seems to have been chosen as the

with portraits of "the blessed Virgin" and the twelve apostles: on the southern wall were suspended paintings of the most remarkable events recorded in the gospels; and the northern struck the eye of the spectator with representations of the terrific visions described in the Apocalypse. "The most illiterate peasant," adds Beda, "could not enter the church without receiving profitable instruction. He beheld with pleasure the amiable countenances of Christ and his saints; or learned from inspection the important mysteries of the incarnation and redemption; or was induced by the sight of the last judgment to descend into his own breast, and to deprecate the wrath of the Almighty."[1]

But Bennet did not stop here. In another pilgrimage he purchased a second series of paintings representing the history of Christ from the gospels, and covered with them the whole circuit of the interior of a church which he had built in honour of "the blessed mother of God:" and in addition to these he brought with him a collection, the object of which was to show the concordance of the two Testaments, and to explain how the emblems exhibited in the former had been verified by facts in the latter. Thus, above a painting of Isaac bearing the wood for his own sacrifice, he placed another of our Saviour bearing his cross to Mount Calvary; above the figure of a serpent

fittest place for the paintings. Thus we are told that in the church built about the same time by Bucge, the portraits of the three apostles, Peter, Paul, and Andrew, graced the absis:—

> Hic Petrus et Paulus, quadrati lumina mundi,
> Absidam gemino tutantur numine lautam,
> Necnon Andreas.
>
> *Apud Alc. Oper.* ii. p. 549.

[1] Bed. Vit. Abbat. Wirem. p. 295; Oper. Min. 145.

raised on high in the desert by Moses, he placed that of our Saviour hanging on high upon the cross. "It was his object," says Beda, "not only to ornament his churches, but to instruct the spectators: that those whose ignorance of letters rendered them incapable of reading the Scriptures, might yet learn the actions of our Saviour from the inspection of the paintings."[1]

If we consider the awe and reverence with which the new Christians were taught to look upon everything connected with the worship of God, there can be no doubt that they would entertain a high respect for these ornaments of their churches: of any particular species of religious honour paid to the paintings themselves, I do not recollect any instance in the contemporary records. But with respect to the cross, it was far otherwise. As the symbol of our redemption, it was to them an object of profound veneration. Crosses were hallowed with a particular service; they

[1] Bed. Oper. Min. pp. 149, 338. Hom. in Natal. S. Bened. p. 188. I shall not notice the old tale of the worship of images and pictures having been introduced into England by Egwin, bishop of Worcester, and soon afterwards confirmed in a synod at London, held by Boniface, the papal legate, and the archbishop of Canterbury. Tali modo, say the centuriators of Magdeburg, cultus imaginum Anglicanis ecclesiis auctoritate antichristi et diabolicis illusionibus est obtrusus, paucis piis frustra gementibus et contradicentibus, circiter annum 712 et 714.—(Spelm. Con. p. 216. Wilk. Con. p. 73.) This imposture was soon detected and exposed both by native and foreign writers; and Spelman, compelled to abandon it with a sigh, left in its place an elaborate note, to prove that though pictures and images were used—for when Augustine and his associates had their first audience of Ethelbert, they carried with them a cross of silver and a painting of our Saviour (Bed l. i. c. 25)—yet they were never worshipped by the Anglo-Saxons. Ne. Beda quidem ipse unius quod sciam meminit, qui vel crucem adoravit vel imaginem (p. 216). That the reader may not be deceived by the authority of Spelman, I request his attention to the language of Beda and of other Anglo-Saxon writers in the ninety-fifth and subsequent page.

were carried in procession; lights were burnt, men were instructed to pray before them. To the instances already mentioned in the preceding pages,[1] may be added the example of Ceolfrith, abbot of Wearmouth, of whom we are told, that when setting out on his pilgrimage to Rome, he bade adieu to his monks; he then *worshipped* the cross, and began his journey:[2] and that of Alcuin, who, whenever he passed by the public cross in his abbey, was accustomed to bend towards it, and repeat in silence this prayer, "We worship Thy cross, O Lord, and call to mind Thy glorious passion; have mercy upon us, Thou who hast suffered for us."[3]

[1] Alcuin puts the following language into the mouth of King Oswald, in his address to his followers before the battle of Hevenfelt:—

Prosternite vestros
Vultus ante crucem, quam vertice montis in isto
Erexi, rutilat Christi quæ clara trophæo,
Quæ quoque nunc nobis præstabit ab hoste triumphum.
Alc. De Pont. Ebor. v.

[2] Dat orationem, ascendit navem cum comitibus, ascendunt et diacones ecclesiæ, cereas ardentes et crucem ferentes auream; transit flumen; *adorat* crucem; equum ascendit et abiit.—(Bed. Vit. Abb. p. 301. Op. Min. p. 157.) See note (F). Egbert wished to go to Rome ad videnda et *adoranda* beatorum apostolorum et martyrum Christi limina.—(Hist. v. c. 9.) Bennet Biscop beatorum apostolorum loca corporum corporaliter visere et *adorare* curavit.—(Vit. Abb. in Op. Min. p. 140.) Ceolfrith ea se vidisse et *adorasse* semper recordans exultabat.—Ibid. 159.

[3] Vir idem flagitabat ut sibi diceret, quando crucem videns, se contra eam inclinabat, quæ verba labris silenter depromeret; ille vero inquit, "Tuam *crucem adoramus*, Domine, et tuam gloriosam recolimus passionem. Miserere nostri, qui passus es pro nobis.—(Vit. Alc. c. ix. tom. i. p. lxvi.) The same prayer is in the Durham Ritual, p. 149. Alcuin placed the following inscription on the pedestal of a cross:—

Vexillum sublime crucis venerare, fidelis,
Qua qui se munit, tristia non metuit.
Crux benedicta nitet, Dominus qua carne perpendit,
Atque suo clausit funere mortis iter.
Hic auctor vitæ mortem moriendo peremit,
Vulneribus sanans vulnera nostra suis.
Alc. Oper. ii. 223.

So marked, indeed, was their veneration for the cross, that three of their writers employ the Latin word *crucicolæ*, "worshippers of the cross," as a generic term, comprehending themselves and all other Christians;[1] "not that by this word they understood," as is observed by the Saxon homilist, "any idolatrous worship paid to the wood or metal of which it was formed, but a worship paid to the Almighty Lord, who was fixed to the cross for our sake."[2]

Such was the belief and practice established among the Anglo-Saxon converts, and faithfully retained by their posterity. But in the eighth century the peace of the Christian Church was disturbed by a controversy respecting the amount of religious honour which it was lawful to render to religious paintings or images. It arose in the East, where the Emperor Leo, the Isaurian, in 726, ordered by public edict that all representations of holy persons or holy things should be defaced or destroyed. Afterwards, in 754, under his son and successor, Constantine Copronymus, a council of three hundred and thirty-eight obsequious prelates pronounced all such honour unlawful and idolatrous. For many years the opponents of this new doctrine were exposed to the severest persecution from the resentments of the two emperors; but the popes persisted in condemning it at the hazard of their lives; the people of Italy, already impatient of the yoke, withdrew

[1] Aldhelm, in his preface to his Liber de Virginitate, terms himself segnis Christi crucicola.—(De Virg. p. 291. Lond. 1693.) See also p. 330. One of his correspondents (Ep. lvii.), and the writer of the life of St. Willibald, use the same term.—Vit. S. Wil. p. 107.

[2] To þæne noðe ne ur gebiddað· na rna þeah to þam treowe· ac to þam Ælmihtigan Drihtne þe on þæne halgan noðe for ur hangode.—Hom. Sax. apud Whel. p. 165.

themselves from the control of the Constantinopolitan emperor; and the churches of the East and West seemed on the eve of an entire separation, when an unexpected reaction took place, and the second council of Nice, under the protection of the Empress Irene, declared, in 787, that the respect paid to the type passed to the antitype; that to honour the resemblance for the sake of him whom it represented, was to honour the original himself; and that of consequence the same kind of veneration was due to the likenesses of Christ and his saints, as was universally shown to the cross, to the book of the gospels, and to other holy things. At this council, Pope Adrian presided by his legates, and its decision was confirmed by his authority. But the revival of religious concord between Rome and Constantinople provoked religious discord between Rome and the northern churches. In them men were accustomed, in common with their brethren in other countries, to display the highest respect for the cross, and the book of the gospels; to light tapers, to burn incense, to kneel and lie prostrate before them; thus admitting in practice that very principle for which the council of Nice had contended.[1] But hitherto they had not applied the same ceremonies to the veneration of pictures and images even of Christ himself; and many among them looked with suspicion and jealousy on doctrines likely to introduce forms of devotion the result of which they could not foresee. But that which confirmed them in their opposition, was a spurious or erroneous copy of the proceedings in the council,

[1] This is forcibly urged by Anastasius Bibliothecarius in his preface to the translation of the Acts of the Nicene council.—Labbe, viii. 676.

according to which Constantine, bishop of Cyprus, was reported to have declared that "holy images ought to be honoured equally with the adorable Trinity;" though, in fact, he had carefully distinguished, as also did the whole council, between the worship of latria due to God only, and that of dulia, the respect which may be justly shown to his creatures.[1] Meetings of bishops within the dominions of Charlemagne were repeatedly held, and remonstrances were sent to Adrian and his successor, requesting them to revoke their approbation, and to reject the doctrine of the council. They acknowledged, indeed, the supremacy of the see of Peter; they professed themselves ready to obey the final decision of his successor; but at the same time solicited permission to lay their difficulties at the feet of the Pope, and to commend them to his most serious attention.[2] They maintained that the Greeks, under the

[1] The original passage ran thus:—*Δεχόμενος καὶ ἀσπαζόμενος τιμητικῶς τὰς ἁγίας καὶ σεπτὰς εἰκόνας· καὶ τὴν κατὰ λατρείαν προσκυνήσιν μόνῃ τῇ ὑπερουσίῳ καὶ ζωαρχικῇ Τριάδι ἀναπέμπω.*—(Bin. tom. v. p. 605.) The meaning is plain: that he venerates, indeed, the holy images, but pays latreutic worship to the Holy Trinity alone. But the translator or copyist, misunderstanding probably the phrase, *τὴν κατὰ λατρείαν προσκυνήσιν*, has made the bishop say exactly the reverse: Suscipio et amplector sanctas et venerandas imagines *secundum servitium adorationis quod* consubstantiali et vivificatrici Trinitati emitto.—(Lib. Carol. l. iii. c. 17.) This false opinion was the chief ground of the complaint made by the Gallic bishops:—In qua scriptum habetur, ut qui imaginibus sanctorum, ita ut deificæ Trinitati, servitium aut adorationem non impenderent, anathema judicarentur.—Conc. Francoford. can. 2; Con. tom. ix. col. 101.

[2] Romana sedes nullis synodicis constitutis cæteris ecclesiis prælata est, sed ipsius Domini auctoritate primatum tenet . . . . . omnes catholicæ debent observare ecclesiæ, ut ab ea post Christum ad munitendam fidem adjutorium petant.—(Lib. Carol. i. 6.) A vestra sanctitate petiimus, ut sacerdotibus nostris liceret quærere et colligere, quæ ad eandem rem definiendam veraciter convenire potuissent . . . . . Ea vestræ sanctitati legenda et examinanda mittere curavimus . . . . . Quos (legatos) non ad hoc ad vestræ almitatis præsentiam misimus, ut

mask of an orthodox definition,[1] sought to conceal the idolatry of their practice; that their real sentiments had been betrayed by the indiscreet language of the bishop of Cyprus; and that the allowance of tapers, incense, and salutations, in the respect to be paid to images, spoke still more forcibly than his words the real nature of this heathenish worship.[2] Adrian and his successors had the prudence to temporize: they argued and waited till the ferment should subside; in the course of a few years the opposition died away, and the obnoxious ceremonies were insensibly adopted by all the northern nations.

It was necessary to advert briefly to these transactions, that the reader may the better understand that which follows. What part, it may be asked, did the Anglo-Saxon church take in this controversy? It is generally answered, that she made common cause with the Gallican prelates, condemned in strong terms

hic docendi gratia directi putarentur.—(Ep. Imper. ad Eug. Pap. in Actis Synodi Paris.) I should not have loaded the page with these quotations, had we not been repeatedly told by modern writers, that in this dispute the northern bishops bade defiance to the authority of the Roman pontiffs.

[1] According to the definition it was lawful to render to images an honorary worship, not that true worship which, according to faith, is due to the divine nature alone—*τιμητικὴν προσκυνήσιν, οὐ μὴν τὴν κατὰ πίστιν ἡμῶν ἀληθινὴν λατρείαν ἣ πρέπει μόνῃ τῇ θείᾳ φύσει.*—(Binnius, v. 819.) Both the Greek word *προσκυνεῖν*, and the Latin adorare, are derived from the custom of putting the hand to the mouth, or kissing the hand, in token of respect—a ceremony of itself indifferent, and applicable to the highest or lowest degree of respect.

[2] These honours were first paid by the Greeks to the statues of the emperors set up in the churches; and from them they gradually passed to the representations of Christ and his saints.—(See Mabillon, Act. SS. Bened. sæc. iv. tom. i. pref. pp. xviii. xix.) Beda tells us that the statue of the Emperor Philippicus, on account of his heterodoxy, was not permitted to be placed in the church at Rome in 716—unde nec ejus effigies in ecclesiam introducta est.—Bed. De Sex Ætat. ad ann. 617.

the proceedings at Nice, and commissioned Alcuin to write a treatise in refutation of the Nicene decrees; and to prove the general correctness of this answer, appeal is confidently made to the following testimony:—

"In 792, Charlemagne sent to England a copy of certain synodical decrees, which he had received from Constantinople; in which book, alas! were found many unseemly things contrary to the true faith; especially that it had been determined by the unanimous consent of almost all the Eastern doctors—not fewer than three hundred bishops and more—that images ought to be adored, a doctrine reprobated by the church of God. Against that doctrine Albinus (Alcuin) composed a letter, wonderfully supported by texts of Scripture, which letter he took with him, in the name of our prelates and princes, to the king of the Franks, together with the same book sent from Constantinople."[1] Now there is nothing very improbable in the substance of this passage. For Charlemagne and Offa corresponded by letter,[2] Alcuin was in England in the year 792;

[1] Anno ab incarnatione Domini 792, Carolus Rex Francorum misit synodalem librum sibi a Constantinopoli directum, in quo libro (heu proh dolor!) multa inconvenientia et veræ fidei contraria reperta sunt, maxime quod pene omnium orientalium doctorum, non minus quam trecentorum et amplius episcoporum unanimi assertione confirmatum fuerit imagines *adorari* debere: quod omnino ecclesia Dei execratur. Contra quod scripsit Albinus epistolam ex auctoritate divinarum Scripturarum mirabiliter affirmatam, illamque cum eodem libro ex persona episcoporum et principum nostrorum regi Francorum attulit.—(Hoved. p. 405, ad ann. 792. Simeon, p. 111. ad eund. ann. Wendov. p. 249, Westm. p. 146, et alii.) Though this passage is found in several of the chroniclers, yet the testimony of them all resolves itself into the testimony of one: for all, by using the very same words, show that they copy, either one from the other or from some common but unknown document.

[2] It is supposed by Inett that Charlemagne alludes to the letter, said to have been taken to France by Alcuin, in answer to a letter

and, if the copy of the Nicene decrees said to have been sent by Charlemagne enjoined the same kind of worship to be paid to paintings and images with that which is due to Almighty God, the English church could not do less than express her abhorrence of so impious a doctrine. Still the story comes to us in a very questionable shape. It does not rest on contemporary authority; it is not mentioned by any Anglo-Saxon writer; it was first made public, about four hundred years after the date of the event, by some of the Anglo-Norman chroniclers of the eleventh century. Whence did they procure the information? They all relate the tale in the very same words, a proof that they copy one and the same writer. But who he was, when or where he lived, what was the origin, or what the value of his testimony, is totally unknown. Can we then rely on it?

On the other hand, we have negative evidence against it, which it is not easy to withstand. We have the life of Alcuin written from the dictation of his beloved disciple and companion Sigulf; we have his works, filling two folio volumes; we have his letters, many of them written about the very time, to Charlemagne, to Offa, and to noblemen and bishops both English and foreign; and yet nowhere do we find any mention of this supposed fact, nor so much even as an allusion to the Nicene decree, or the controversy respecting it. We have, moreover, the history of that

from Offa. But Alcuin returned to France in 792 or 793, and Charlemagne's epistle to Offa could not be written before 796, for it alludes to the death of Pope Adrian, which happened on the 25th of Dec. 795. —See Charlemagne's answer in Malmesbury, De Reg. i. p. 129.

controversy in the writings of foreigners living at the time; yet not one of them appears to know anything of the pretended letter of Alcuin, or of the decision of the Anglo-Saxon church. Again, we have letters and treatises by the dissentient bishops in condemnation of the Nicene decree, and in defence of their own conduct. They at least would not have failed to allege in their favour, if it had been in their power, the adhesion of the English bishops to the same opinion. But they too are silent. It seems to me that this body of negative evidence must outweigh the authority of an obscure and unknown document, which did not see the light till four hundred years afterwards.[1]

4. At the present day the spirit of curiosity prompts men to visit the scenes of ancient wisdom and ancient glory: in the Anglo-Saxon times it conducted the pious Christian to the places which had been consecrated by the triumphs of religion. To the adventurous spirit of the northern nations, the practice of pilgrimage offered inestimable attraction; and the Anglo-Saxons were particularly distinguished by their attachment to this devotion. In estimating the respective merits of different countries, none could challenge, in their opinion, an equality with Palestine: there the religious wanderer might visit the cave in which the Saviour was born, might follow him in the course of his mission, might climb the mountain on which he suffered, and kiss the sepulchre in which his body was deposited. But the perils of the enterprise were sufficient to appal the most resolute courage. Jerusalem groaned beneath the yoke of the infidels: it lay at the distance of more

[1] See note (G).

than three thousand miles,[1] and imagination multiplied the dangers of navigating an unknown sea, and of travelling through nations of different languages, manners, and religions. Yet the bold temerity of some adventurers was crowned with success; and they returned, after an absence of several years, to relate to their astonished countrymen the wonders which they had witnessed. Of these, the most ancient recorded in history is St. Willibald, whose long peregrination has been faithfully related by the pen of a female writer.[2] Her narrative I shall abridge; nor will the reader perhaps refuse to follow through a few pages the first of his countrymen who ventured to approach the court of the Khalifs, and penetrated as far as the holy city.

The father of Willibald had been persuaded to visit, in company with his sons, the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul. He died on the road, at Lucca; and the pilgrims, after paying the last duties to their deceased parent, continued their journey. At the sight of Rome they experienced emotions to which they had hitherto been strangers; and the different monuments of piety, with which that capital abounded, successively awakened their devotion and admiration. The curiosity of Willibald was enlarged; his imagination wandered to the places which had been consecrated by the

[1] According to the Roman Itineraries, the road from Sandwich to Jerusalem was 3,566 Roman, or 3,271 English miles.—See Gibbon's Decline and Fall, c. 2.

[2] She was a nun of Heidenheim, and a relation of St. Willibald. She wrote as he dictated, and appeals for her veracity to his deacons: "Ab ipso audita et ex illius ore dictata præscripsimus, testibus mihi diaconis ejus."—Hodoep. Will. inter lect. ant. Canis. edit. Basnage, tom. ii. p. 106.

corporal presence of the Redeemer; and the fearless pilgrim resolved to visit the land of promise, the theatre on which God had displayed the wonders of his power and mercy. But he found the zeal of his brother Winibald less fervid, or more prudent; and was compelled to seek among the other Saxon pilgrims associates of similar views and equal resolution.

In the year 723, soon after the feast of Easter, Willibald departed from Rome with only two companions; but his example excited the enthusiasm of his countrymen, and during his journey their number increased to eight.[1] The time was favourable to their design. Though the Spanish Moslems were constantly at war with their Christian neighbours, the trade of the Mediterranean was undisturbed, and the eastern subjects of the Khalifs occasionally visited the ports of Greece and Italy. At Naples, the good fortune of the pilgrims conducted them to an Egyptian merchant, who willingly received them on board his vessel; but their speed was retarded by the delays of commerce, and a circuitous navigation; and fourteen months expired before they reached the coast of Syria. From Naples they successively sailed to Reggio in Calabria, to Catana in Sicily, where the inhabitants were accustomed to oppose the veil of St. Agatha to the fiery eruptions of the neighbouring mountain; to Manifasia, to the islands of Coos and Samos; and at last, after a long and tedious voyage, arrived in safety at the port of Ephesus. During the several weeks which they spent on the coast

[1] He left Rome cum duobus sociis (Hodoep. p. 109. Itiner. p. 118): when he arrived in Syria, erant cum S. Willibaldo septem contribules ipsius.—Hodoep. p. 110. Itiner. p. 119.

of Natolia, they had much to suffer from fatigue and hunger; but they satisfied their curiosity by visiting the most celebrated cities, and their piety by offering up their prayers at the shrines of the most celebrated saints. Paphos, in the island of Cyprus, next attracted their notice. There they rested to celebrate the festival of Easter, and afterwards repaired to Constantia, the ancient Salamis, to venerate the relics of St. Epiphanius. From the west of the island to the opposite coast of Syria the passage was short; they landed at Tharratæ, a port belonging to the Moslems, and walked as far as Edessa, the residence of the Khalif. At the entrance of the city they were stopped by the guard, and conducted by the order of a magistrate to the palace.

Four years before this period, the Moslems had been compelled to retire with disgrace from the siege of Constantinople. Jealous of the designs of the Imperial court, the Khalif treated Willibald and his companions as spies in the pay of the Greeks, and commanded them to be detained in close confinement. It was in vain that a Christian merchant, out of charity, and for the benefit of his soul, offered a considerable sum for their ransom; his zeal could obtain no more than a mitigation of their sufferings. With a handsome present he purchased permission to conduct them twice in the week to the public baths, and on the Sundays to the church of the Christians. As they passed through the bazaar, the inhabitants assembled to see the strangers; and, if we may believe the national vanity of their female historian, it was their youth, their beauty, and the

elegance of their dress, that attracted the curiosity of the infidels.[1]

The subjugation of Spain by the arms of the Moslems, had established a frequent communication between that country and the court of Syria; and the natives were occasionally compelled to pay their homage to the successor of Mahomet. A Spanish Christian, whose brother possessed a considerable employment at court, listened with pity to the story, and eagerly espoused the protection of the pilgrims. Having discovered the captain who had landed them at Tharratæ, he obtained an audience of the Khalif, and explained the real intentions of the prisoners. The prince heard him with kindness; and, when he understood that they came from the extremity of the west, from an island beyond which no land was known to exist,[2] he declared himself satisfied, ordered them to be liberated without paying the customary fees, and gave to them a written permission to pursue their journey to Jerusalem.

With lightsome hearts the pilgrims departed from Edessa. A tedious road of a hundred miles conducted them to Damascus; and a week was spent in visiting the curiosities of the royal city. They were now on the confines of Palestine. After crossing the Libanus and the higher Galilee, they arrived at Nazareth, the ancient residence of the parents of the Messiah. Over the reputed spot on which the archangel announced his future birth to the virgin, the Christians had built a

[1] Cives urbium curiosi jugiter illic venire consueverant illos speculari, quia juvenes, et decori, et vestium ornatu bene induti erant.—Hodoep. p. 110.

[2] De occidentali plaga, ubi sol occasum habet, isti homines venerunt. Nos autem nescimus terram ultra illos, et nil nisi aquam.—Ibid.

magnificent church; but its riches tempted the rapacity of the Moslems, whose forbearance was repeatedly purchased with valuable presents.[1] Cana, distinguished by the first miracle of Jesus, exhibited to their view six earthen vessels, ranged under the altars, which they were assured had been used at the marriage feast. Thence they climbed the steep mountain of Tabor; and a monastery on the summit, dedicated to Christ, Moses, and Elias, recalled to their minds the glorious mystery of the Transfiguration. They descended to the city of Tiberias: the Christian inhabitants were numerous; and a synagogue of Jews preserved the memory of the ancient Rabbins. Curiosity led the travellers to the sources of the Jordan; and ascending the Anti-Libanus they came to two springs, distinguished by their respective names of Jor and Dan, which united their streams in the valley, and gave their common appellation to the river. On the declivity of the mountain were numerous herds of cattle, remarkable for their size, the shortness of their legs, and the length of their horns. Cæsarea, built at the union of the two streams, was principally inhabited by Christians. Following the course of the river, they arrived at the place where tradition reported that Christ was baptized. The water had retired to a distance,[2] but a

[1] The wealth of the Christians, or the forbearance of the infidels, was at last exhausted. The church was destroyed, and afterwards rebuilt.—Mariti, vol. ii. p. 162.

[2] According to Maundrell (Journey from Aleppo, p. 82), the river at this place has retreated at least a furlong from its ancient boundary. But Mariti informs us that in the rainy season its waters overflow their banks, swell to the breadth of four miles, and often, on account of the great inequality of the ground, divide themselves into several streams.

small rivulet still occupied the ancient channel; and a wooden cross, erected in the middle, pointed out the spot. A church had been raised over it for the celebration of baptism, and to satisfy the devotion of the crowds who on the feast of the Epiphany were eager to bathe in the river. Its waters were believed to confer health to the infirm, and fecundity to the barren. As they passed by the city of Jericho, they admired the fertility which was imparted to the neighbouring country by the fountain of Elias; and, after visiting an ancient monastery, beheld at a distance the venerable remains of Jerusalem. With tears of joy and gratitude the pilgrims entered the holy city. The first object which arrested their attention was the basilic, founded by Constantine the Great, on the spot where the true cross had been discovered by his mother St. Helena. At the eastern front were erected three crosses to perpetuate the memory of the event. In the neighbourhood stood the Church of the Resurrection, which contained the sepulchre of Christ, an invaluable treasure in the estimation of Christian piety. Originally it had been a vault, hewn in the solid rock; in the church it rose high above the pavement, was of a square figure, and terminated in a point. The entrance was on the eastern side, and an opening on the right hand introduced the pilgrim to the chamber which had received the dead body of the Redeemer. The inside of the sepulchre was lighted by fifteen golden lamps:[1] and near the door lay a large

[1] Arcuulph, a Gallic prelate, had some time before visited the Holy Land. Beda abridged his narrative, which in some points differs from that of St. Willibald. He tells us that the sepulchre was round, that

stone, in memory of that which had formerly closed the entrance.

After visiting, with sentiments of the most lively devotion, the other religious monuments contained within the walls of Jerusalem, they crossed the valley of Josaphat, and repaired to the Mount of Olives. On it stood two churches, of which one marked the garden that had witnessed the agony of Jesus before his passion; the other occupied the summit from which he ascended into heaven. In the centre of the latter, the spot which had received the impression of his last footsteps was surrounded with a circular rail of brass; in the roof of the church was left a large opening; and two lofty columns of marble represented the two angels that attended at his ascension. A lamp, surrounded with glass, was always kept burning in the aperture.[1]

I shall not follow the pilgrims in their subsequent excursions, which their historian has reduced to a barren catalogue of names. They traversed Palestine in every direction, till their curiosity was exhausted, and fatigue and infirmity admonished them to return to Europe. But to leave was as difficult as to enter the territory of the Moslems; and the companions of Willibald were compelled to make a second journey to Edessa, to solicit, from the justice or caprice of the Khalif, the permission to revisit their native country.

the number of the lamps was only twelve, and that, of these, four burnt in the inside, and eight were fixed on the roof.—See Beda de Locis Sac. c. ii. p. 316.

[1] When Maundrell visited the mountain, no part of the church remained, except an octagonal cupola, which the Turks used as a mosque.—P. 104.

The prince was absent, but their request was granted by one of his ministers. When they had returned to Jerusalem, they were joined by Willibald, and bade a last farewell to the Holy City. Their route led them through Sebaste, the ancient Samaria, to the opulent city of Tyre, where their luggage was strictly examined. The ignorance or experience of antiquity had ascribed to the opobalsamum the most salutary virtues; and the exportation of this valuable medicine was severely forbidden by the jealousy of the khalifs.[1] But the ingenuity of Willibald eluded the prohibition. To a gourd filled with the precious liquid, he had joined another gourd, filled with petroleum: both were so artfully united as to exhibit the appearance of one vessel; and the contrivance of the pilgrim defeated the curiosity of the Mohammedan officers.[2]

In his return, Willibald spent two years at Constantinople; visited the volcanic eruptions in the islands of Lipari; ascertained the origin of the pumice-stone, which was so useful to the monastic writers; and at last, after seven years of pilgrimage, retired to the celebrated monastery of Cassino. Ten years later, at the request of his relative St. Boniface, he was drawn from this retirement by Gregory, the Roman pontiff, and sent into Germany (ann. 740), where he laboured zealously in the diffusion of religious knowledge, and died at an advanced age, bishop of Eichstadt, in the year 786.

But it was given to few to display the courage, and

[1] On the balsam extracted from the balm which grows in the plains of Jericho, see Beda (de Loc. Sac. c. ix. p. 320), and Mariti (p. 344).

[2] Hodoep. pp. 113, 114.

to experience the good fortune of Willibald.[1] Rome lay at a shorter distance than Jerusalem, and presented numerous attractions to the piety of the pilgrims. It was the residence of the sovereign pontiff: its inhabitants boasted that they were the descendants of the first Western Christians: the mortal remains of St. Peter and St. Paul reposed within its churches; and its catacombs contained the relics of innumerable martyrs. Yet to travel at this period from England to Rome, was an attempt of no small difficulty and danger. The highways, which formerly conducted the traveller in security to the capital of the empire, had been neglected and demolished during the incursions of the barbarians; and, if the constitution of the pilgrim could bid defiance to the fatigue of the journey and the inclemency of the weather,[2] he was still exposed to the insults of the banditti who infested the passes of the Alps, and of the marauders who were kept in the pay of turbulent and seditious chieftains.[3] Hospitality

[1] If, as history assures us, Alfred corresponded with the patriarch of Jerusalem, and sent alms as far as the Indies, it is not improbable that his messengers visited the Holy Land.—(Chron. Sax. p. 86. Malm. de Reg. i. l. ii. p. 187. Wise's Asser, p. 58.) By the conversion of the Hungarians in the tenth century, the length of the journey was shortened, and its danger diminished. Wythman, abbot of Ramsey, in the reign of Canute, made a successful pilgrimage to Jerusalem (Hist. Ram. p. 436); and his example was followed by the historian Ingulf, who joined the retinue of several German princes, and was so fortunate as to escape the sword and the pestilence which devoured one-third of his companions: "Tandem de triginta equitibus, qui de Normannia pingues eximus, vix viginti pauperes peregrini, et omnes pedites, multa macie extenuati, reversi sumus."—Ingulf, f. 514.

[2] Elfsine, archbishop of Canterbury, was frozen to death in the Alps. His companions had recourse to the unusual expedient of ripping open the belly of a horse, and plunging his feet into it.—Malmes. de Pont. l. i. f. 114. Osbern, Vit. S. Odonis, p. 86.

[3] See the Life of St. Boniface by St. Willibald, c. v. St. Elphege was robbed as soon as he entered Italy (Ang.-Sac. vol. ii. p. 129);

was, indeed, a favourite virtue among the northern nations; and religion offered her protection to the person and property of the itinerant devotee; but the mountaineers respected neither the dictates of humanity nor the decrees of councils. Of the numbers who braved the difficulties of the journey, many lived not to revisit their homes; and of the rest the greater part returned sickly, despoiled, and emaciated.[1] Charlemagne at the solicitation of Offa,[2] Conrad at that of Canute,[3] had promised protection to the English pilgrims; but it was proved by experience, that the sincerity or the power of these princes was not equal to their engagements or inclinations. The fate, however, of former adventurers proved a useless lesson to their countrymen; and the objections of prudence were silenced by the impulse of curiosity. To behold the ancient capital of the world, and receive the benediction of the successor of St. Peter, kings abandoned their thrones, and bishops intrusted to others the care of their flocks; clergy and laity, monks and nuns, followed their example; and even the lower classes of the people were eager to gratify their wishes, by obtaining a place in the retinue of their superiors.[4]

the bishops of York, Wells, and Hereford, and the earl of Northumberland, in their return (Malm. f. 154). In the years 921 and 922, two caravans of Anglo-Saxon pilgrims were surprised and massacred in the Alps.—Baron. ex Flodoard. ann. 921, xiii.

[1] In the ancient Life of St. Winibald, it is remarked, that strangers were generally subject to a fever at their arrival in Rome. Magna febris fatigatio advenas illic venientes visitare seu gravare solet.—Vit. S. Winib. apud Canis. p. 126.

[2] Ep. Car. Magni, Malm. i. 129. Ep. Alc. ii. 618.

[3] Ep. Canut. apud Wilk. p. 298.

[4] Romam adire curavit, quod eo tempore magnæ virtutis æstimabatur.—(Bed. l. iv. c. 23.) Quod his temporibus plures de gente Anglorum, nobiles, ignobiles, laici, clerici, viri ac feminæ certatim

The manners of the present age have branded their conduct with the name of superstition; but candour must extort the confession, that their motives were innocent, their labours useful. It were difficult to assign a reason why it should be more lawful to visit the scenes of ancient literature, than those of religious virtue; and he who has experienced the enthusiasm which is kindled in the mind by viewing the former residence of heroes and legislators,[1] will easily conceive with what force the chains, the tombs, and the relics of the martyrs spoke to the hearts of these foreign Christians. In a political view, the travels of the pilgrims were highly serviceable. They contributed to connect the independent nations which had divided among them the fragments of the empire; to dissipate the prejudices of national partiality; and to diffuse the knowledge of the arts and sciences. Rome, though she had suffered severely from the ravages of the barbarians, was still the centre of knowledge, and the repository of whatever was elegant in the West. The riches, the ruins of the imperial city, astonished the strangers; they returned with ideas more enlarged, and views more elevated: attempts were made to imitate

facere consuerunt.—(Id. l. v. c. 7, et Op. Min. 203. Also West. ann. 738, p. 140. S. Bonif. ep. 20, 40, 51, 69.) Many persons repaired to Rome in the decline of life, that they might end their days at the tombs of the apostles. This was the object of Ceolfrith, abbot of Wearmouth, who died, however, on his road, at Langres. The narrative of his journey, by one of his monks, contains several interesting particulars. See note (F).

[1] "Naturane," says Cicero, "nobis datum dicam, an errore quodam, ut cum ea loca videamus, in quibus memoria dignos viros acceperimus multos esse versatos, magis moveamur, quam quando eorum ipsorum aut facta audiamus aut scriptum aliquod legamus."—De Fin. l. v.

at home what they had admired abroad; and to their observation and industry England was indebted for almost every improvement which she received before the Conquest.[1] Yet, even when pilgrimages were most fashionable, there were many who, though they dared not condemn a devotion consecrated by the practice of ages, justly contended that their countrymen carried it to excess.[2] They complained that, by the absence of bishops, the interests of the church were abandoned; by that of princes, the tranquillity of the state was endangered; that journeys of devotion were undertaken to elude the severity of the penitential canons; and that the morals of the travellers were often impaired, instead of being improved. The last charge is forcibly corroborated by the conduct of several among the female pilgrims. Their beauty proved fatal to their chastity: amid strangers, without a friend, perhaps without the means of subsistence, they sometimes fell victims to the arts of seduction; and the apostle of Germany confesses, in the anguish of his zeal,

[1] The improvements introduced by St. Wilfrid and St. Bennet Biscop have been already noticed. The latter, however, seems to have disapproved of pilgrimages, when they were not justified by the prospect of great advantage. He was careful to procure masters and books for his monks, that they might not be tempted to make pilgrimages, but be willing intra monasterii claustra quiescere.—Bed. Hom. in Natal. Bened. Abbat. tom. vii. col. 465.

[2] The abbess Bucge was desirous to visit Rome, but so many objections were raised by her friends, that she wrote to St. Boniface for his advice. "Scimus quod multi sunt, qui hanc voluntatem vituperant, et hunc amorem derogant, et eorum sententiam his astipulationibus confirmant, quod canones synodales præcipiant, quod unusquisque in eo loco ubi constitutus fuerit, et ubi votum suum voverit, ibi maneat, et Deo reddat vota sua."—(Ep. Bonif. 38, p. 50.) The archbishop answered, that it were better to remain in her monastery, unless the vexatious exactions of her enemies compelled her to leave it.—Ep. 20, p. 28.

that there were few cities in Lombardy or Gaul which had not witnessed the shame of some of his itinerant countrywomen.[1] But his remonstrances were not more successful than those of St. Jerome and St. Gregory had been in preceding ages;[2] the stream of pilgrimage was still directed towards the Vatican; the practice was defended by curiosity, and sanctioned by example; and during the existence of the Saxon dynasty, Rome almost annually saw a crowd of English travellers offering their devotions at the shrine of St. Peter.[3]

5. Before I conclude this chapter, I must notice an extraordinary practice, which united the most solemn rites of religion with the public administration of justice. To elicit, in judicial proceedings, the truth from a mass of unsatisfactory and often discordant evidence, demands a power of discrimination and accuracy of judgment which it were in vain to expect from the magistrates of a nation just emerging from ignorance and barbarity. The jurisprudence of an illiterate people is generally satisfied with a shorter and more simple process; with them, in doubtful cases, an appeal to the equity of the Deity would at once

[1] Ep. Bonif. 105, p. 149. Wilk. p. 93.

[2] S. Greg. Nys. tom. iii. Ap. p. 72. S. Hieron. ep. 13.

[3] The Saxon Chronicle remarks, as something extraordinary, that in the year 889 no pilgrims went to Rome, and Alfred's letters were sent by two messengers.—(Chron. Sax. p. 90.) On the subject of pilgrimage, Henry has made the discovery, that the Saxons considered it as the only, or at least the most efficacious, method of securing their salvation. In support of this assertion, he adduces a letter of Canute the Great, in which he makes the king say, that "on account of St. Peter's influence in heaven, he thought it *absolutely necessary* to obtain his favour by a pilgrimage to Rome."—(Henry, vol. iv. p. 303.) But in the original, the king is silent respecting this necessity. He merely says that "he thought it very useful to solicit the patronage of St. Peter with God." Ideo specialiter ejus patrocinium apud Deum expetere, valde utile duxi.—Ep. Canut. apud Wilk. p. 297.

exonerate the conscience of the judge, and establish the guilt or innocence of the accused. While the Anglo-Saxons adored the gods of their fathers, the decision of criminal prosecutions was frequently intrusted to the wisdom of Woden;[1] when they became Christians, they confidently expected from the true God that miraculous interposition which they had before sought from an imaginary deity. He was a being of infinite knowledge and infinite power, the patron of virtue, and the avenger of crimes; could he, then, remain indifferent when he was solemnly invoked? could he permit falsehood to triumph over truth; innocence to be confounded with guilt?[2] This reasoning, though false, was plausible; and it made a deep impression on the minds of the illiterate. By Gregory the Great it is said to have been condemned;[3] but if his disapprobation was known to the missionaries, the authority of the pontiff was borne down by the torrent of national manners; and, during six centuries, appeals to the judgment of God were authorized and commanded by the jurisprudence of the Saxons, as well as of all other kindred tribes of Teutonic origin.

The time, the nature, and the ceremonies of these appeals were defined by the legislature with the minutest exactitude. To employ in judicial trials the days particularly consecrated to the Divine service was

[1] We find the practice of ordeal prevail among all the northern nations that embraced Christianity after the fifth century: a peculiarity which must be ascribed to some general custom previously established among those nations.

[2] Missa Judicii, apud Spelm. Glos. voce Ordalium.

[3] Decret. par. 11, caus. 11, quæs. 5, cap. Men. But the second part of the chapter, which contains the prohibition, does not occur in St. Gregory's works.

deemed indecorous; and on festivals and fast-days ordeals were strictly prohibited.[1] Nor were they indiscriminately permitted in all cases, or left to the option of the parties. In civil suits, the law had pointed out a different process: in criminal prosecutions, when the guilt of the accused could be clearly established, they were unnecessary; but when it was presumed only on the force of circumstantial evidence, recourse was had to the judgment of God. The accuser swore to the truth of the charge, the accused by oath attested his innocence, and the necessary preparations were made for the ordeal.[2]

As the discovery of the truth was now committed to the decision of Heaven, the intermediate time was employed in exercises of devotion. Three nights before the day appointed for the trial, the accused was led to the priest; on the three following mornings he assisted, and made his offering at the mass; and during the three days, he fasted on bread, herbs, salt, and water.[3] At the mass on the third day the priest called him to the altar before the communion, and adjured him by the God whom he adored, by the religion which he professed, by the baptism with which he had been regenerated, and by the holy relics that reposed in the church, not to receive the eucharist, nor go to the ordeal, if his conscience reproached him with the crime of which he had been accused.[4] He then gave him

[1] Leg. Sax. p. 173.

[2] Ibid. p. 26. Wilk. Gloss. p. 422. Aqua vel ferro non licet in causa aliqua experiri, nisi in qua modis aliis non potest veritas indagari. —De Jure Feudali Sax. c. 24, art. 19, apud Van Espen. ii. 336.

[3] Leg. Sax. p. 61.

[4] Ic eop halrıge on Fæbep nama. ȝ on Sunu nama ꝥ ıꝛ upe ðpihten

the communion with these words:—"May this body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ prove thee innocent or guilty this day."[1] As soon as the mass was finished, the prisoner again denied the charge, and took the following oath:—"In the Lord, I am guiltless, both in word and deed, of the crime of which I am accused." He was then led to the trial.[2]

Of these trials there were four different kinds: 1. The corsned was a cake of barley bread, of the weight of one ounce, and seems to have been instituted in imitation of the water of jealousy, mentioned in the Hebrew Scriptures.[3] Over it a prayer was pronounced by the priest, in which he begged that God would manifest the truth between the accuser and the accused; that if the latter were guilty, when he took the cake into his hands, he might tremble and look pale; and when he attempted to chew it, his jaws might be fixed, his throat contracted, and the bread be thrown out of his mouth. It was then given to him to eat, and the event decided his guilt or innocence.[4] 2. In the ordeal of cold water, the prisoner was stripped of his

hælende Cpiꝛt. ⁊ on þer Dalgan Laꝛꝛer. ⁊ foꝛ þæne cpiꝛtneꝛꝛe ðe ge unbeꝛꝛengan. ⁊ foꝛ ðe halgan Ðpineꝛꝛe . . . . Þ ge to þyꝛ hurle ne gangen na to þam opbele. gif ge ꝛeyld on eop piꝛen ðæꝛ ðe eop man tihth oððe on gepoꝛtum oððe on gepittenyꝛꝛe.—MS. Ritual. Dunel. A. iv. 19, f. 55, p. 114 in printed copy.

[1] Corpus hoc et sanguis Domini nostri Jhesu Christi sit vobis (vel tibi) ad probationem hodie.—Miss. Judic. apud Spelm. voce Ordal.

[2] Leg. Sax. pp. 61, 64.

[3] Let the reader consult the fifth chapter of the book of Numbers, from *v.* 11 to 31, and he will see that the service for the Christian ordeals was formed in imitation of the ordeal prescribed there in cases of suspicion of conjugal infidelity.

[4] Exorcism. Panis Ordeacii, apud Spelm. voce Ordal. Sometimes cheese was substituted.—Ibid.

clothes; his hands were bound crosswise to his feet; his body was sprinkled with blessed water, and the cross from the altar, with the book of the Gospels, was given to him to kiss. Then a cord, with a knot in it two ells and a half from the extremity, was fastened round his waist, and he was slowly lowered into the pool. If he sank so as to draw the knot below the surface, he was pronouncecd innocent and liberated; but, if he had the misfortune to float, his guilt was manifest, and he was delivered to the officers of justice.[1] From these two forms of trial it seems probable that the guilty would have little to fear; from the following it is difficult to conceive how the innocent could escape. 3. For the ordeal by hot water, a fire was kindled under a caldron in a remote part of the church. At a certain depth below the surface of the water, which depth was augmented in proportion to the enormity of the offence,[2] was placed a stone, or a piece of iron. Strangers were excluded, and the accuser and accused proceeded to the place, each attended by twelve friends, who were ranged in opposite lines at a small distance from the fire. The priest said or sung the Litany; at its conclusion a deputy from each line was sent to ascertain the heat of the water, and on their declaration that it was actually boiling, the accused plunged his naked arm into the

[1] Adjuratio aquæ.—Ibid. Leg. Sax. pp. 26, 61.

[2] In the ordeals by hot water and hot iron, the trial for greater crimes was called the *threefold*, that for smaller, the *onefold* ordeal. The former was ordered for the crimes of sacrilege, treason, murder, idolatry, and magic. In the threefold ordeal the depth of the stone was equal to the distance between a man's elbow and the ends of his fingers, and the weight of the hot iron was three pounds.—Leg. Sax. p. 27.

caldron and brought out the stone. The priest instantly wrapped the arm in a clean linen cloth, and fastened it with the seal of the church. At the expiration of three days the seal was broken, the bandage was unfolded in presence of the priest and the friends of both parties, and the fate of the accused was decided according to the appearance presented by the scalded arm. To save him from punishment, it was necessary that it should be perfectly healed.[1] 4. In the ordeal by hot iron the same precautions were observed with respect to the number and the position of the attendants. Near to the fire was measured a space on the floor equal to nine of the prisoner's feet, and this was divided by cross lines into three equal portions, by the first of which stood a small pillar of stone. As soon as the mass was begun, a bar of iron, of the weight of one or three pounds, according to the nature of the accusation, was laid on the coals. At the last collect it was taken off, and placed on the pillar. The prisoner instantly took it up with his hand, made three steps on the lines previously marked,[2] and threw it down. The treatment of the burn, and the indications of guilt or innocence, were the same as in the trial by hot water.[3]

[1] Leg. Sax. pp. 26, 61. Adjuratio aquæ ferventis, apud Spelm. voce Ordal.

[2] Thus he carried it in three steps the whole length of the nine feet; not, as some have supposed, the short length of three feet out of the nine—Ad novem pedum mensuram ferrum perferat.—Leg. Sax. Gloss. p. 424.

[3] Ibid. I have not mentioned a species of the ordeal by fire, which consisted in walking on the hot iron, instead of carrying it in the hand. I do not recollect any mention of it before the Conquest, except in the story of Queen Emma; a story which deserves little credit, as it appears to have been unknown to those who ought to have been best acquainted with it,—Ingulf, Aelred, Malmesbury, Hoveden, Huntingdon, and the author of the Saxon Chronicle.

To these four ordeals, a fifth was added by most of the continental nations,—that of duel or private battle. To the Anglo-Saxons it was unknown till after the Norman Conquest. Of all, it was the most absurd; and, of all, the only one which modern wisdom has thought proper to perpetuate.

The different issues which attended the ordeals present a subject of ingenious speculation. That all the accused were not proved innocent by the corsned and the immersion, nor all guilty by the hot water and the hot iron, is evident; otherwise these appeals to the justice of God must soon have sunk in the public estimation. The effect of the corsned may be ascribed to the terrors of a guilty conscience, and excited imagination; and of the immersed it is probable that many were unable to sink, from the manner in which the body was bound and let down into the water;[1] but to account for the different results of the other ordeals is a task of considerable difficulty. Some may, perhaps, be inclined to think that God might, on particular occasions, interpose in favour of innocence; others, that the culprit was often indebted for his escape to his own dexterity, or the assistance of a robust constitution. But modern writers generally suppose, that the clergy were possessed of a secret, by which, as they saw convenient, they either indurated the skin before the ordeal, or afterwards healed the wound within the space of three days. This opinion, however, is unsupported by any contemporary voucher,

[1] It should be remembered, that, as the body is not equal in weight to the water which it displaces, it will not sink, if the head be kept steady, and the arms remain motionless under the water.

and is at the best highly improbable. This secret, so widely diffused throughout almost every nation of Christendom, and constantly employed during more than six centuries, could not have been concealed from the knowledge of the public; and if it were known, how can we believe that legislators would have still persisted in the practice of trial by ordeal for the conviction of guilt and the acquittal of innocence? In the laws of the Anglo-Saxon princes, it is repeatedly approved; and we are indebted for its abolition, at a later period, not to the wisdom of the legislature, but to the remonstrances of the clergy. In the middle of the ninth century the lawfulness of the practice had been disputed by Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, and defended by Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims.[1] Soon afterwards it was condemned as superstitious by Pope Stephen V., and later by his successors Alexander II., Celestine III., Innocent III., and Honorius III.; yet so powerful was the force of ancient custom, and so great the difficulty of finding a substitute in cases of circumstantial evidence, that it kept its ground in England till the reign of Henry III., whose guardian, Gualo, was the legate of Honorius. It was probably through his influence that the council determined to enforce the prohibition of the Holy See; and that, in the third year of the king's reign, the judges going their circuits received instructions which, though they were meant only for a temporary provision, led in the result to a total abolition of the practice. Instead

[1] Agobard, Ep. contra damnabilem opinionem putantium divini judicii veritatem igne, vel aquis, vel conflictu armorum patefieri.—Hincmari Epis. ad Hildegar. Metens. Episcopum. See Cave, i. 515, 536.

of sending the accused to the ordeal, according to ancient precedent, they were ordered, where the offence was of a trifling nature, to accept of security for good behaviour; where the charge implied greater criminality, to compel him to abjure the realm; and when it amounted to murder, or robbery, or arson, to remand him for the present to prison without loss of life or member; evidently because it had not yet been determined how to proceed in such circumstances.[1] After this we meet with no instance of trial by the judgment of God in England.[2]

[1] Rex dilectis et fidelibus. . . Cum prohibitum sit per ecclesiam Romanam judicium ignis et aquæ, provisum est a consilio nostro ad præsens, ut in hoc itinere vestro sic fiat de rectatis, &c.—Patent Rolls of Hen. III. anno tertio, apud Selden, App. ad Eadmer. p. 204.

[2] We must except the ordeal by cold water for the detection of witches, which was in use till the beginning of the last century.

CHAPTER XI.

LITERATURE, &c.

LITERATURE OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS—LEARNING OF THEODORE AND ADRIAN—COLLECTIONS OF BOOKS—COURSE OF STUDIES—THEOLOGY—THE LATIN CLASSICS—VERNACULAR POETRY—LATIN POETRY—PHILOSOPHICAL STUDIES—LOGIC—ARITHMETIC—SYSTEM OF NATURE—ASTROLOGY AND ASTRONOMY—COSMOGRAPHY—MEN OF LEARNING—ST. ALDHELM—BIRTH AND EDUCATION OF BEDA—HIS WORKS—LETTER DESCRIBING HIS DEATH—ALCUIN—HE TEACHES IN YORK—IS INVITED TO GAUL BY CHARLEMAGNE—IS MADE ABBOT OF ST. MARTIN'S—HIS DEATH AND WORKS.

THE conquests of the northern nations arrested the progress of human knowledge, and replunged the greatest part of Europe into the barbarity and ignorance from which it had slowly emerged during the lapse of several centuries. If the fall of the empire did not totally extinguish the light of science, it is to religion that we owe the invaluable benefit. The expiring flame was kept alive by the solicitude of the churchmen, and their industry collected and multiplied the relics of ancient literature.

The functions of the priesthood require a considerable portion of learning, and the daily study of the sacred writings, and of the ecclesiastical canons, has always been recommended to the attention of the clergy. By the monks, knowledge was originally held in inferior estimation. They were laymen, and preferred the more humble occupations of agriculture and the mechanical arts, as better adapted to the life of penitence to which they had bound themselves. The

disciples of the saints Anthony and Pachomius spent a great part of their time in the manufacture of mats and baskets; and their example was so approved by the patriarch of the western monks, that he enjoined his followers to devote at least seven hours of the day to manual labour.[1] The veneration which religious orders usually retain for the memory of their founders, enforced a temporary observance of this regulation; but when monasteries were endowed with extensive estates, and the monks could command the labour of numerous families of bondmen, it was insensibly neglected; and the study of the sciences appeared a more useful and more honourable employment. The propriety of this innovation was sanctioned by the necessities of religion. The sword of the barbarians had diminished the numbers of the clergy; and the monks were invited to supply the deficiency, as ministers of the public worship and apostles of infidel nations. To understand the Latin service, it became necessary to acquire a competent knowledge of that language; and the duty of instruction induced them to peruse the writings of the ancient Fathers. Under the influence of these motives, schools were opened in the monastic as well as in the clerical communities; and the rewards of reputation and honour were lavishly bestowed on the faintest glimmerings of science. But when a thirst for knowledge is once excited, it is seldom satisfied with its original object. From the more necessary branches of religious learning, many of the students wandered with pleasure to the works of the poets and philosophers of Greece and Rome; and their curiosity

[1] Reg. S. Bened. c. 48.

eagerly, but often injudiciously, devoured whatever had escaped the ravages of their ancestors. In these literary pursuits, the Saxon clergy and monks acquired distinguished applause. Their superiority was, for more than a century, felt and acknowledged by the other nations of Europe; and, when the repeated invasions of the Danes had unhappily cut off every source of instruction in England, the disciples of the Saxon missionaries in Germany, maintained the reputation of their teachers, and from their monastery at Fulda diffused the light of knowledge over that populous and extensive country.[1]

For this advantage our ancestors were principally indebted to the talents and industry of Theodore, archbishop of Canterbury, and of Adrian, abbot of St. Peter's, in the same city, both eminently versed in the languages of Greece and Rome, and perfect masters of every science which was known at that period. Compassionating the ignorance of the converts, they dedicated their leisure hours to the instruction of youth; and masters formed under their inspection were dispersed among the principal monasteries. Their exhortations and example excited an ardour for improvement, which was not confined to the cloister, but extended its influence to the families of the nobility and the courts of the kings. The children of the

[1] See Mabillon, Act. SS. Bened. Sæc. iv. tom. i. p. 188; tom. ii. p. 23. Macquer, Histoire Ecclésiastique, vol. i. p. 551, and the German poet quoted by Camden :—

> Hæc tamen arctois laus est æterna Britannis,
> Illa bonas artes et Graiæ munera linguæ,
> Stellarumque vices et magni sidera cœli
> Observans, iterum turbatis intulit oris.
>
> *Camd.* tom. i. p. 166.

thanes educated in the neighbouring monasteries imbibed an early respect, if not a passion, for literature; several of the princes condescended to study those sciences on which their barbarous, but victorious fathers, had trampled with contempt; and others, by rewards and donations, endeavoured to distinguish themselves as the patrons of the learned.[1] Even the women caught the general enthusiasm; seminaries of learning were established in their convents; they conversed with their absent friends in the language of ancient Rome; and frequently exchanged the labours of the distaff and the needle for the more pleasing and more elegant beauties of the Latin poets.[2]

In modern times the art of printing, by facilitating the diffusion, has accelerated the progress of knowledge; but, at the period of which we are speaking, the scarcity of books was an evil deeply felt and lamented by these ardent votaries of science. Literature declined and fell with the power of Rome, and

[1] Bed. Hist. l. v. c. 12. Abbat. Wirem. p. 300.

[2] St. Aldhelm wrote his treatise De Laudibus Virginitatis for the use of the abbess Hildelith and her nuns. The style in which it is composed shows that, if he wished them to understand it, he must have considered them as no mean proficients in the Latin language. From this treatise we learn that nuns were accustomed to read the Pentateuch, the books of the prophets, and the New Testament, with the commentaries of the ancient Fathers; and to study the historical, tropological, allegorical, and anagogical senses of the different passages: profane history, chronology, grammar, orthography, and poetry, also employed their attention.—(St. Aldhel. De Laud. Virg. p. 294. See also Annal. Bened. vol. ii. p. 143.) Of their proficiency, several specimens are still extant. The lives of St. Willibald and St. Wunebald were both written in Latin by an Anglo-Saxon nun. Several letters in the same language, by English ladies, are preserved among the epistles of St. Boniface. In some of them are allusions to the Roman poets; and in one, Leobgythe, who was then learning the rules of metre from her mistress Eadburge, sends to the missionary a few hexameter verses of her own composition, as a specimen of her proficiency in that difficult acquirement.—Ep. Bonif. 36, p. 46.

the writings of the ancients were but slowly multiplied by the tedious labour of transcribers. To discover and obtain these remains of ancient knowledge, were among the principal objects which prompted so many Anglo-Saxons to visit distant countries:[1] by the acquisition of a few books, they considered their labours amply repaid, and in their estimation, a single volume was often of equal value with an extensive estate.[2] But necessity soon taught them to adopt a method by which the number of copies was more nearly proportioned to the increase of readers. In every monastery a considerable portion of time was daily allotted to the humble, but useful occupation, of transcribing ancient manuscripts; and so efficient was the resource, that when Charlemagne meditated the revival of letters in Gaul, he was advised to solicit assistance from the treasures accumulated in the Saxon libraries.[3] Of these repositories of science, the most ancient was that of Canterbury, which owed its establishment to the provident care of Gregory the Great, but had been considerably augmented by the zeal and industry of

[1] Thus Alcuin says of his master Ecgbert:—

> Non semel externas peregrino tramite terras
> Jam peragravit ovans, sophiæ ductus amore;
> Si quid forte novi librorum aut studiorum
> Quod secum ferret, terris reperiret in illis.
>
> *De Pont. Ebor.* v. 1454.

[2] A treatise on cosmography was sold to Aldfrid, king of Northumbria, for an estate of eight hides of land, which appears to have been considered as its real value.—Bed. Vit. Abbat. p. 300.

[3] Alc. Op. i. p. 52. Malm. de Reg. f. 12. Some years afterwards, Lupus, abbot of Ferrieres, wrote to Altsig, abbot in the church of York, to lend him several books to be transcribed, and promised that they should be faithfully restored.—Annal. Bened. tom. ii. p. 684. Bib. Pat. tom. ix. Lup. ep. 2.

Archbishop Theodore.[1] Another numerous collection of books was possessed by the monastery at Wearmouth, the fruit of the labours of St. Bennet Biscop, whose five journeys to the continent, and indefatigable exertions, have been gratefully recorded by the pen of the Venerable Beda.[2] But of all the seminaries which flourished in England, that belonging to the clergy of York could boast of the most valuable and extensive library; and in the imperfect catalogue of its volumes which Alcuin has inserted in his writings, we find the names of most among the Greek and Roman writers who had distinguished themselves either in profane or sacred literature.[3]

[1] Bed. Hist. l. i. c. 29. In the appendix to Smith's Beda, p. 690, is an ancient account of the books brought into England by St. Augustine. One of them, a MS. of the Gospels, is said by Wanley (p. 151), to be preserved in the library of Corpus Christi college, at Cambridge, L. 15. Godwin mentions a MS. of Homer, brought to England by Theodore, which was so beautifully written, as scarcely to be equalled by any other manuscript or printed copy.—God. de Præs. p. 41.

[2] Bed. Abbat. Wirem. pp. 295, 299. Before he died, bibliothecam, quam de Roma nobilissimam copiosissimamque advexerat, solicite servari integram, nec per incuriam fœdari, aut passim dissipari præcepit.—Ibid.

[3] Ælbert, archbishop of York, left to Alcuin the care of his library, his caras super omnia gazas.—(Alc. de Pont. et Sanct. Ebor. Eccl. v. 1526.) That writer has given the following account of the books contained in it:—

Illic invenies veterum vestigia patrum,
Quidquid habet pro se Latio Romanus in orbe;
Græcia vel quidquid transmisit clara Latinis;
Hebraicus vel quod populus bibit ore superno,
Africa lucifluo vel quidquid lumine sparsit.
Quod pater Hieronymus, quod sensit Hilarius, atque
Ambrosius præsul, simul Augustinus, et ipse
Sanctus Athanasius, quod Orosius edit avitus,
Quidquid Gregorius summus docet, et Leo papa:
Basilius quidquid, Fulgentius atque coruscant.
Cassiodorus item, Chrysostomus atque Joannes.
Quidquid et Athelmus docuit, quid Beda magister,
Quæ Victorinus scripsere, Boetius, atque
Historici veteres, Pompeius, Plinius, ipse

In the system of education established by Theodore, and zealously propagated by his disciples, religious knowledge and moral improvement were pronounced the two great objects of study. To the influence of the sciences in softening the manners and multiplying the comforts of society, they appear to have been indifferent or insensible; but they endeavoured to rouse the ardour of their pupils, by promising to them a more distinct view of the economy of religion, and a more extensive acquaintance with the works of the Creator. The life of man, they observed, was too short, his time too precious to be thrown away on pursuits unconnected with his welfare in a future existence.[1] Hence, of the various branches of knowledge, Theology (under that name were comprised the dogmata of faith and the principles of morality) assumed the highest place in their estimation; and the other sciences were only valued as the humble handmaids of this superior acquirement. Its excellence and utility are the constant theme of their eloquence: it was recommended to the attention of laymen and of females; and if the young student was exhorted to learn the rules of grammar and the figures of elocution,

Acer Aristoteles, rhetor quoque Tullius ingens:
Quid quoque Sedulius, vel quid canit ipse Juvencus,
Alcuinus et Clemens, Prosper, Paulinus, Arator,
Quid Fortunatus vel quid Lactantius edunt,
Quæ Maro Virgilius, Statius, Lucanus, et auctor
Artis grammaticæ, vel quid scripsere magistri,
Quid Probus atque Phocas, Donatus, Priscianusve,
Servius, Euticius, Pompeius, Comminianus.
Invenies alios perplures.

Alc. de Pont. et Sanc. Ebor. Eccl.

[1] See Aldhelm's letter to his pupil Ædilwald. Malm. l. v. de Pont. p. 340. Anglia Sac. ii. p. 5.

it was that he might understand with greater facility the volumes that contained this important science.[1] Of the scholastic divinity, which so universally prevailed in succeeding ages, they were ignorant; and whatever theological learning they acquired, they professed to derive from two collateral streams,—the inspired writings and the works of the Fathers.[2] The inspired writings they studied assiduously from their infancy; but considering them a region overspread with darkness, they hesitated to advance a step without the aid of a guide, and scrupulously pursued the track which had been opened by the labours of the most ancient of the Christian doctors. Beda and Alcuin, the brightest luminaries of the Saxon church, in expounding the sacred volumes, shine principally with borrowed light: it is but seldom that they express any sentiment of their own; they content themselves with a long chain of quotations from ancient and approved writers, and give the preference to this manner of exposition, on the ground that it places at once the opinions of the most eminent teachers before the eyes

[1] Nec tamen sæcularium literarum contemnenda est scientia, sed quasi fundamentum teneræ infantium ætati tradenda est grammatica, aliæque philosophicæ subtilitates disciplinæ, quatenus quibusdam sapientiæ gradibus ad altissimum Evangelicæ perfectionis culmen ascendere valeant, et juxta annorum augmentum sapientiæ quoque accrescant divitiæ.—Alc. Oper. i. p. 285, ep. ccxxi. See also St. Aldhelm de Virg. pp. 292, 294; Ang. Sac. ii. p. 5.

[2] Of the Fathers, St. Gregory indulges the most frequently in allegorical interpretation. Gratitude taught the Saxons to admire and imitate his writings. They adopted this mode of explication; and as France and Germany received from them their most eminent teachers, they introduced, or at least propagated it among the learned of those countries, by whom it was universally followed for several centuries. See Fleury's fifth discourse (Art. xi.)

of readers, who probably will never have it in their power to consult the originals.[1]

But the study of theology required a long previous course of elementary training. In all the monasterial schools the learner began with the rudiments of the Latin grammar. Latin was the language in which the church service was performed—the language in which the Scriptures were read—the language of the Fathers in whose writings the interpretation of those Scriptures was sought; whence the acquisition of the Latin language became an object of the highest importance to all who were designed to perform the duty of the choral service, or who sought to fit themselves for office either in the church, or within their own community. This at the first, when the teachers were foreigners and the pupils men just emerging from a state of barbarism, and when none of those educational aids and appliances, which we possess, were within reach, could not have been a very easy task; yet so patient was the diligence

[1] Hæc in Scripturam sanctam meæ meorumque necessitati ex opusculis venerabilium patrum breviter annotare, sive etiam ad formam sensus et interpretationem eorum superadjicere curavi.—(Bed. Hist. v. 24.) He moreover informs us, that his object in making these collections was to benefit those theological students who had no opportunity of consulting the originals. For the works of the Fathers extended to so many volumes, that no individual who was not of considerable wealth could procure them. At the same time, that he might not appropriate to himself that which belonged to others, he had been careful to place on the margin of his manuscript, opposite to each passage, a mark indicative of the author from whom it was taken: on which account he most earnestly prayed every copier of his work to omit none of the said marks—Multumque obsecro, et per Dominum legentes obtestor, ut, si qui forte nostra hæc, qualiacunque sunt, opuscula transcriptione digna duxerint, memorata quoque nominum signa, ut in nostro exemplari reperiunt, adfigere meminerint.—(Ep. ad Accam de Princ. Genesis, i. p. 169. De Evangelio Lucæ, pp. 179, 180.) None, however, of these marks or names now remain.

of the masters, so unremitting the ardour of the pupils, that every difficulty was mastered; and we are assured by Beda himself, no mean judge on such a matter, that there were living in his time disciples of Theodore and Adrian, as well acquainted with the languages of Rome and Greece as with their own native tongue.[1]

These new scholars, as was natural, were soon led to make the trial of their own powers. They began to correspond in Latin: they exchanged their own Latin compositions with each other; they even ventured to compose short treatises in Latin on religious subjects. Their success at each step emboldened them to proceed further. Aldhelm led the way; Beda followed; Alcuin succeeded to Beda: and by the end of a century from the death of Adrian, the literary reputation of the Anglo-Saxon clergy was established in every part of the Western church. Their Latin style was of course formed on the models with which they were chiefly conversant, the Latin translation of the Scriptures and the works of the ecclesiastical writers; not that they universally excluded the more ancient authors from their reading—the contrary is evident from the many classic allusions to be found in their correspondence; but that they were taught to look upon the perusal of heathen writings as a superfluous and even a dangerous pursuit, which could be tolerated only with the view of learn-

[1] Usque hodie supersunt de eorum discipulis qui Latinam Græcamque linguam æque ac propriam, in qua nati sunt, norunt.—(Bed. iv. c. 2.) Afterwards, having occasion to mention Albinus, an Anglo-Saxon who succeeded to Adrian in the government of the monastery, he says of him—Albinus discipulus ejus, in tantum studiis Scripturarum institutus est, ut Græcam quidem linguam non parva ex parte, Latinam vero non minus quam Anglorum, quæ sibi naturalis est, noverit.—Id. v. c. 20.

ing from them the rules of grammar, the quantity of syllables and the laws of metre. In the Scriptures, and in the commentators on the Scripture, the Christian would find matter much more deserving of his attention than in the fictions of licentious poets and the loves of imaginary deities.[1] Hence, as the translation of the Scriptures was not distinguished by the purity of its language, and as the Latin Fathers wrote long after the Augustan age of Roman literature, we cannot expect to meet with many specimens of correct and classic taste in the writings of men who made such works the daily subject of their studies. The ambition of the greater number was fully satisfied, if they were only able to express their meaning, and that too in very homely, often in semi-barbarous, perhaps in ungrammatical language.[2] There was, however, a school among them that took a higher flight; and, looking upon simplicity as a fault, endeavoured to excel in splendour all preceding writers. Their object was to surprise and dazzle: they transferred to their Latin prose all the gorgeous apparatus of their national poetry; bewildered themselves and their readers amidst a profusion of

[1] See St. Aldhelm on this subject in Ang. Sac. ii. pp. 6, 14. It is at the same time plain that he was well acquainted with that which he condemns.

[2] Yet it would be unfair to attribute to the authors themselves all the faults which we find in their writings. Many belong to the transcribers. The copier was as liable to err then, as the compositor is now; and it was seldom that the manuscript could be revised and corrected, in the same manner as the printed sheet is revised and corrected at present. The consequence was, that many manuscripts abounded with omissions and mistakes, which render, what was originally plain, unintelligible. To be convinced of this, we need only compare a multitude of passages in different parts of the Durham Ritual with the original prayers or extracts in other Sacramentaries. See, for example, the Nuptial Benediction, p. 109.

extravagant metaphors; and, as if the language of Rome was too poor to depict their conceptions, bespangled every sentence with Greek words in a Latin dress.[1] Malmesbury terms this the pompous style, peculiar to the Anglo-Saxons.[2] That they cultivated it with greater assiduity and success than the writers of other nations, may be true; but there is so much of it to be found in the works of Gildas, the British historian, works well known to the Anglo-Saxons, that I look upon him as probably the master to whom they were originally indebted for it. It was about the latter part

[1] As a specimen, the reader may take the following passage from a letter written by Aldhelm to the monks of St. Wilfrid. It is meant to describe the respect paid by a swarm of bees to their "*king*"—"Perpendite, quæso, quomodo examina apum, calescente cœlitus caumate, ex alveariis nectare fragrantibus certatim emergant, et earum autore linquente brumalia mansionum receptacula, densarum cavernarum cohortes rapido volatu ad æthera glomerante, exceptis duntaxat antiquarum sedium servatricibus, ad propagationem futuræ sobolis relictis, inquam mirabilius dictu, rex earum spissis sodalium agminibus vallatus, cum hyberna castra gregatim egreditur, et cara stipitum robora rimatur, si pulverulenta sabulonis aspergine præpeditus, seu repentinis imbribus cataracta Olympi guttatim rorantibus retardatus fuerit, et ad gratam cratem sedemque pristinam revertatur, omnis protinus exercitus consueta vestibula perrumpens, prisca cellarum claustra gratulabundus ingreditur."—(Gale, p. 340.) In a similar style his disciple Ædilwald describes the instructions which he had received from him, and then proceeds thus:—"Quibus ad integrum exuberantis ingenii epulis ambronibus siticulosæ intelligentiæ faucibus avide absumptis, meam adhuc pallentem hebetudinis maciem largissima blandæ sponsionis epimenia affluenter refocillabat, pollicitans omni me desideratæ lectionis instrumento, quo potissimum meæ mediocritatis industriam satis inhiantem agnoverat, libenter edocendo imbuere."—(St. Bonif. Ep. p. 76.) To these may be added an example from St. Boniface himself, who speaks thus:—"Hac de re universi aurilegi ambrones apo ton grammaton agion frustratis afflicti inservire excubiis, et fragilia arenarum incassum ceu flatum tenuem sive pulverem captantia tetendisse retia dignoscuntur: quia kata Psalmistam, *thesaurizant, et ignorant cui congregent illa*, et dum exactrix invisi Plutonis, mors videlicet, cruentatis crudeliter infrendens dentibus in limine latrat, tum tremebundi, &c."—Ep. Bonif. p. 2.

[2] Ang. Sac. ii. p. 9.

of the seventh century that this pomposity of style was in the highest repute among our ancestors; and the celebrated St. Aldhelm bore away the prize from a host of competitors. After his death it appears to have died away gradually. Beda, though he speaks of Aldhelm favourably as a writer,[1] had too much good sense to imitate him in this respect; and Alcuin, though he occasionally labours in the pursuit of elegance, cautiously avoids every approach to inflated diction. For two centuries after Aldhelm we scarcely meet with a single specimen of it; but we find it again, about the middle of the tenth century, revived in all its extravagance, and employed to decorate the proems of charters.[2]

But the Anglo-Saxons did not confine themselves to mere prose; they had also their poets, both native gleemen and Latin versifiers. 1. The gleeman existed among them before their conversion. He was a minstrel, either attached to the service of a particular chieftain, or wandering from place to place, and subsisting on the bounty of his hearers. We have evidence that the songs of these men were enthusiastically admired; that the most striking passages were remembered, repeated, and communicated from mouth to mouth; and that to chant them to the harp was an acquirement common even to the lowest classes. Thus Cædmon was a farmer's servant, as were his friends and neighbours; and yet we learn that at their merry meetings it was expected of each that he should sing to the harp in his

[1] Beda says of him, that he is sermone nitidus (l. v. c. 18).
[2] See note (H).

turn for the gratification of his companions.[1] Cædmon afterwards became a monk at Whitby, of the class devoted to agricultural labour. He was of course unable to read; yet, when a subject had been proposed and explained to him, he would repeat it in language so noble, and in numbers so harmonious, that his teachers became his hearers, and looked upon him as a person inspired. His poetry was exclusively religious. He sung of the creation of the world, of the chief events recorded in the Scriptures, of the last judgment, and of the future happiness or misery of man. The fame which he acquired excited a spirit of emulation among the scholars of his nation; "still," says Beda, "illiterate as he was, and surrounded with competitors, he never yet has met with an equal."[2]

Contemporary with Cædmon in the north, was St. Aldhelm in the south, who also cultivated the vernacular poetry as ancillary to the cause of religion. At a time when no parish or country churches existed, he saw the advantage of combining the profession of the gleeman with the office of the missionary; and, having composed tales and ballads in the Anglo-Saxon tongue on subjects likely to interest the vulgar, he was accustomed to station himself on a bridge, or at the junction of two cross-roads, and there to sing his poems to the harp, till he had collected a numerous audience around him; and then, laying aside the gleeman, he would profit by the opportunity to instruct his hearers in the doctrine of the gospel. Much of his Saxon

[1] In convivio, cum esset lætitiæ causa, ut omnes per ordinem cantare deberent, appropinquare sibi citharam cernebat.—Bed. iv. c. 24.

[2] Bed. ibid.

poetry survived him, and was transmitted by tradition from one generation to another. By King Alfred he was pronounced the prince of native poets; and Malmesbury assures us that one of his ballads was still a favourite with the people four hundred years after his death.[1]

But the race of poets and gleemen did not expire with Cædmon and Aldhelm. We meet with numerous traces of them in every portion of the Anglo-Saxon period. The principal facts recorded in the Scriptures, the more impressive of the Christian doctrines, the practices and festivals of the church, and the legends of the saints, furnished an exhaustless source of matter for the religious poet; and the secular gleeman continually found new subjects for his harp in the remarkable events of the time, in battles and victories, in the succession and marriages of princes, and in the tales and traditions still cherished among the vulgar. Though the larger portion of this immense mass of national poetry must have perished, yet many interesting relics have been preserved both in our own and in foreign collections. To them the attention of the public was formerly called by Junius and Hickes;[2] no one, however, responded to the call, and for a long period the Anglo-Saxon muse was suffered to remain almost without an admirer, till Mr. Turner, in the beginning of the present century, evoked a better spirit, by his dissertation on Anglo-Saxon poetry, in the third volume of his history.[3] Since that time several eminent

[1] Ang. Sac. ii. 4.

[2] By Junius, who published his Cædmon in 1655, and by Hickes, who published his Thesaurus in 1705.

[3] See vol. iii. pp. 300—377.

scholars have distinguished themselves by their industry in rescuing ancient poems from oblivion, and by giving more correct editions of those which had previously been published.[1]

It might have been expected that the Anglo-Saxon scholars would have introduced into their native poetry something of the manner and of the grace, which they admired in the poets of Greece and Rome; but the contrary was the case. Though they transferred occasionally the peculiarities of their own versification into their Latin compositions, they carefully preserved the national style and spirit of their own poetry pure from any admixture of foreign forms or improvements. As it existed at the very introduction of Christianity, so we find it at the Norman conquest. The verses run in couplets, generally of short lines, which require at least two long syllables with or without complement; occasionally of longer lines, into which three such syllables are admitted. Final rhymes may be found in the more early specimens, but they are only of occasional occurrence, as if they had neither been sought for nor rejected; in later times we meet with them more frequently, but chiefly when the object of the writer is the distribution or enumeration of particulars. But that which was held in the highest estimation, and deemed an almost indispensable embellishment, was alliteration, or the repetition of the same initial letter

[1] As "The Poem of Beowulf," "The Traveller's Song," "The Battle of Finnesburh," by Mr. Kemble, and more recently the "Legend of St. Andrew" from the Vercelli manuscript. The "Paraphrase of Cædmon" by Mr. Thorpe, with other smaller poems in his "Analecta;" "The Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry" by Conybeare; Alfred's "Anglo-Saxon Version of the Metres of Boethius, by Fox," &c.

in the emphatic syllable of two, or at least of one, of the words in the first, and of the leading word in the second line of the couplet.[1] With the aid of this ornament, and of the necessary rhythmus, the wandering sceop or poet could always secure the attention of his hearers; but there were among them poets of a much higher grade, stately in their march, and rich in imagery, pouring out metaphors and epithets in profusion, and subsituting periphrastic amplification in the place of direct description. This last was characteristic of their poetry; for the simile was almost unknown among them. The very ancient poem called "Beowulf" "has but two similes; the much later, 'Nibelung Not,' but two or three." There are, however, several in the Vercelli poems; which is considered a proof that those poems were composed in the last age of Anglo-Saxon poetry.[2]

2. The success of Cædmon proved that even the illiterate might excel in the composition of native verse; but scholars were ambitious to record their names among the votaries of the Latin muse. In the school of Adrian at Canterbury, all the varieties of classic metre were studied; and the man who had

[1] The following are the rules laid down by Rask :—1. That there be two words in the first line and one in the second, beginning with the same letter. 2. That if the word in the second begin with a vowel, any other vowel is to be considered as rhyming with it in the first line. 3. That these words must begin with emphatic syllables, or syllables on which the stress is placed; so that the toneless derivative syllables *ge, be, a,* are not to be taken into account. 4. That short words without emphasis, preceding the emphatic syllable, may be treated as the syllables *ge, be, a.* 5. When the lines are short, there may be one word only for the rhyme in the first line.—Thorpe's Translation of Rask's Grammar, p. 135. See note (I).

[2] Mr. Kemble's preface to the Legend of St. Andrew, p. 9.

mastered the "centena genera metrorum" was naturally desirous to make the trial of his proficiency in his new acquirement.[1] The essays of the first adventurers received encouragement from the praise of their teachers, and won the admiration of their countrymen; a host of imitators and competitors followed; and in time a great body of Latin poetry, the production of native writers, was formed in the shape of inscriptions, epitaphs, riddles, menologies, panegyrics, lives of saints, and descriptions of the building and dedication of churches and altars. It would be unjust to deny, that amidst this multitude of pieces may be discovered passages of considerable merit, particularly among the works of Aldhelm, Beda, Alcuin, Ethelwolf of Lindisfarne, and Wolstan of Winchester; but it must also be admitted that the name of poetry was often lavished on simple and homely prose, if it were only divided into lines of legitimate measure; and that the difficulty of Latin versification was generally pleaded and accepted as an apology for the absence of every other literary excellence.

It should moreover be noticed that most of the Anglo-Saxon writers of Latin poetry appear to have admired and imitated the laborious trifles—the stultus labor ineptiarum—which, during the decline of literary taste, had so frequently exercised the ingenuity of the continental scholars. 1. Among these the first place was given to riddles; a species of composition at-

[1] Read St. Aldhelm's description of his studies:—Poetica septenæ divisionis disciplina, hoc est, acephalos, procilos cum cæteris qualiter varietur, qui versus monoschemi, qui pentaschemi, qui decaschemi certa pedum mensura terminantur; et qua ratione catalectici, et brachycatalectici, et hypercatalectici colligantur.—Ang. Sac. ii. 6.

tempted by Aldhelm, Boniface, and Alcuin. The chief model appears to have been the Ænigmata Symposii: but St. Aldhelm aspired to the praise of originality; and, therefore, while his model confined each riddle within the narrow space of three lines, the Anglo-Saxon indulged his sportive muse in greater liberty, and composed one hundred ænigmata, dividing them into several classes, beginning with one of four lines, and progressively adding to the number.[1] 2. Some writers delighted in couplets in which the first half of the hexameter verse is repeated, so as to form the second half of the pentameter,—as in the hymn by Beda in praise of St. Edilthryde:—

> Alme Deus Trinitas, quæ sæcula cuncta gubernas,
> Adnue jam cœptis, alme Deus Trinitas.
> Bella Maro resonet, nos pacis dona canamus,
> Munera nos Christi, bella Maro resonet, &c.[2]

3. With many the difficulty of the metre was increased by the introduction of middle and final rhymes in each line, as in this riddle by St Aldhelm.

LEBES.

> "Horrida, curva, rapax, patulis fabricata metallis,
> Pendeo, nec cœlum tangens, terramve profundam;
> Ignibus ardescens, nec non et gurgite fervens.
> Sic vario geminas patior discrimine pugnas,
> Dum lymphæ latices tolero, flammasque feroces."
>
> *Bib. Pat.* vol. viii. p. 28.

4. Acrostics were also admired, both single and double; the latter being formed by the combination of the

[1] Bibl. Pat. tom. viii. p. 26. We have also ænigmata by Alcuin (ii. p. 237); others by St. Boniface. See Mr. Wright's Biog. Lit. i. p. 332.

[2] Bed. Hist. l. iv. c. 20.

initial and final letters of the same lines; to be read, sometimes in a descending, sometimes in an ascending direction. The following double acrostic of his own name, is from the pen of Aldhelm :—

Arbiter, æthereo Jupiter, qui regmine sceptrA,
Lucifluumque simul cœli regale tribunaL
Disponis, moderans æternis legibus illuD.
Horrida nam mulctans, torsisti membra BehemotH
Ex alta quondam rueret dum luridus arcE,
Limpida dictanti metrorum carmina præsuL
Munera nunc largire : rudis quo pandere reruM
Versibus ænigmata queam clandestina fatU,
Si Deus indignis tua gratis dona rependiS, &c.

p. 21.

Literary toys, of these descriptions, are to be found in the writings of the best Anglo-Saxon scholars, and seem to have been prized in proportion to the study and skill which were required to produce them.

In the foregoing instances it may be remarked, that the laws of the legitimate metre have been observed; a task sufficiently irksome and perplexing to these new scholars, just emerging from a state of barbarism. But among the Latins, there had long existed poets of an inferior class, who had emancipated themselves from the shackles which had been imposed upon them by their classic masters, and had adopted a more easy system of versification, by substituting the harmony of emphasis or accent for the harmony of metre. It might, indeed, happen, that both would coincide; but that was a matter of chance: the poet judged of the melody by the ear, attending to the artificial distribution of the accent, and not to the measure of the syllable.[1] Thus in a line of eight syllables, by placing

[1] Rythmus, says Beda, est verborum modulata compositio, non

the ictus on every second syllable, he formed an imitation of Iambic tetrameter verse; and by placing it on the first, and every second syllable afterwards in succession, an imitation of the Trochaic. Beda furnishes us with an example of each; the first, he takes from "the beautiful hymn:"—

Rex (sémp) itérne, Dóminé,
Rerúm Creátor ómniúm,
Qui éras ánte sæculá
Sempér cum Pátre Fíliús.[1]

The second, from the alphabetic hymn[2] on the last judgment, which began thus:—

'Apparébit répentína
Díes mágna Dóminí
Fúr obscúra vélut nócte
'Improvísa óccupáns.[3]

We cannot be surprised if this form of versification was admired and imitated by the Anglo-Saxon converts.

metrica ratione, sed numero syllabarum ad judicium aurium examinata, ut sunt carmina vulgarium poetarum.—(De Arte Metrica, c. 24, p. 77.) It has been supposed that by vulgares poetæ he meant poets who composed in the vulgar or Anglo-Saxon tongue; but, from the instances which he quotes, it appears to me that he meant poets who wrote by the ear and not by rule. There is no resemblance between these instances and Anglo-Saxon poetry.

[1] In Beda's works we read "Rex æterne," where a syllable seems wanting. I have therefore substituted "sempiterne," as it is read in all the ancient offices. It is the beginning of the hymn used in the choral service on Sundays, during the Paschal time. Under Urban VIII., all these hymns were made to run in legitimate metre: whence we now read—

Rex sempiterne *cœlitum*,
Rerum Creator omnium,
Æqualis ante sæcula
Semper parenti filius.

[2] He calls it alphabetic, because the first stanza began with the letter A, the second with B, and ran thus through the alphabet, in imitation of some of the psalms in Hebrew.

[3] Bed. ibid.

It came to them with several recommendations. Not only was the melody more striking, and the composition more easy, but it was consecrated in their eyes by the example of the celebrated St. Ambrose, and by the introduction of hymns composed by him in that form into their choral service. It should, however, be observed, that in all their imitations they are careful to add an ornament, which is found only by accident in the original models, the ornament of final rhymes to the lines of each couplet. There is no probability that it can have been of native growth; it must assuredly have been imported by the missionaries, together with other forms, from the Continent, and have been eagerly adopted by their scholars from their national fondness for the jingle of alliteration.

It does not appear that they attempted to imitate any other than the Iambic and Trochaic metres; but short poems in these two kinds of versification were often employed, for the purpose of impressing on the memory the rules of art, or the rubrics of the church service. Thus, that the chanters might be acquainted with the titles and order of the several psalms called the *Gradual* psalms, they learned by heart the following poem:—

Ad Dóminúm clamáverám
Cum tríbulátus fúerám,
Et *éxaudívit* Dóminús
Servúm suúm quantóciús.

Levávi méos óculós
Statím ad *móntes* próximós
Undé erít altíssimó
Auxíliúm a Dóminó, &c.[1]

[1] It is published in the Thesaurus Novus Anecdotorum, iii. 294; and is to be found in Alcuin's works (i. pp. 169, 389), who calls it

In like manner, Beda, to his poem De Ratione Temporis, in hexameter verse, prefixes an enumeration of the several divisions of the year, in mock trochaic:—

'Annus sólis cóntinétur
Qúatuór tempóribus,
'Ac deínde ádimplétur
Dúodécim ménsibus,
Quínquagínta ét duábus
Cúrrit hébdomádibus,
Trécenténis séxagínta
'Atque quínque díebus, &c.[1]

It would, however, appear, that some among the Anglo-Saxon poets were not content with these forms of versification as they received them from their teachers; but endeavoured to improve them, by the frequent introduction of alliteration — not the alliteration of their native poetry, for that required the alliterative and accented syllables to be the same—but the repetition of the same letter in the same line, or in both lines of the couplet, without attention to the accent. This form is found in several short poems by St. Aldhelm and his pupils, and not, as far as I know, in any other compositions. The following is a favourable specimen, from a poem by Ethilwald, a scholar of St. Aldhelm, addressed by him to that prelate, and descriptive of his personal appearance:—

Summo satore sobolis
Satus fuisti nobilis,

---

hymnum veterem. The words printed in italics point out the several psalms, which are, the first—Ad Dominum cum tribularer clamavi, et exaudivit me; the second—Levavi oculos meos in montes, unde veniet auxilium mihi, &c.

[1] Bed. Oper. i. p. 54. It is unnecessary to remark, that these mock Iambic and Trochaic measures in Latin poetry, are the originals from which we have borrowed the measures now employed in English poetry.

Generosa progenitus
Genetrice expeditus.
Statura spectabilis
Statu et forma agilis.
Caput candescens nivibus
Cingunt capilli nitidis,
Lucent sub fronte lumina,
Lati ceu per culmina
Cœli candescunt calida
Clari fulgoris sidera.[1]

Readers acquainted with Anglo-Saxon poetry must have remarked how nearly the rythmus of the shorter lines approximates to the rythmus of Adonic verse in the classic poets. This peculiarity did not escape the notice of our ancestors. Several of them have left Latin compositions in Adonic measure, but could not resist the temptation of enriching at the same time the legitimate metre with the addition of their national alliteration. The following specimens are taken from two poems attributed to Alcuin; which, however, are more likely to have been written by some of his pupils, unless we attribute the inferiority of the poetry to the restraint imposed on the poet by his attempts at alliteration:

Te homo laudet
Alme Creator,
Pectore, mente
Pacis amore,
Non modo parva
Pars quia mundi est, &c.

Care, fidelis,
Credule nate,
Primus amore,
Atque paterno
Discipulatus
Dulcis amore, &c.[2]

[1] That this form of poetry was exclusively of English origin, appears from the description of it by Ethilwald; who, having no name for it, describes it as without metre, and consisting of eight syllables in the line, with a repetition of the same letter adapted to the course of each line in the couplet—non pedum mensura elucubratum sed octonis syllabis in uno quolibet versu compositis, una eademque litera comparibus linearum tramitibus aptata.—(Inter. Ep. Bonif. ep. lxv. p. 77.) The example is taken from the poem sent with the letter, p. 91. See also pp. 44, 75. We meet with examples of such alliteration in English poetry long after the Conquest. [2] Alc. Oper. ii. 152, 235.

From the Latin language, its grammar, prosody, and orthoepy, the student passed to the other branches of science, the most valued at that period;[1] to the art of logic, the principles of which were to be derived from the works of Aristotle and his disciples, under the five heads of the Isagogæ, the Categories, the laws of reasoning, the Topica or fountains of argument, and the subtleties of the Perihermeniæ;[2] and when he had mastered these, to the study of numbers, a science

[1] In the course of liberal education recommended by Alcuin, philosophy is divided into physica, logica, and ethica. 1. Physica admits of seven subdivisions—into arithmetic; geometry, or the mensuration of solids and space; astronomy, which is confined to the rising and the setting of the heavenly bodies; astrology, which regards their motions, nature, and influence; mechanics; music; and medicine. 2. Logica includes dialectica and rhetorica; of which the first is acutior ad res inveniendas; the second, facundior ad easdem dicendas. 3. Ethica regulates the conduct, by the four virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.—(Alc. ii. 332.) The following is his description of the studies pursued in the school of York under his master Albert:—

> Indolis egregiæ juvenes quoscunque videbat,
> Hos sibi conjunxit, docuit, nutrivit, amavit;
> His dans grammaticæ rationis gnaviter artes,
> Illis rhetoricæ infundens refluamina linguæ;
> Illos juridica curavit cote polire;
> Illos Aonio docuit concinnere cantu,
> Et juga Parnassi lyricis percurrere plantis.
> Ast alios fecit præfatus nosse magister
> Harmoniam cœli, solis lunæque labores,
> Quinque poli zonas, errantia sydera septem,
> Astrorum leges, ortus simul atque recessus,
> Aerios motus pelagi, terræque tremorem,
> Naturas hominum, pecudum, volucrumque ferarum
> Diversas numeri species variasque figuras.
> Paschalique dedit solemnia certa recursu,
> Maxime Scripturæ pandens mysteria sacræ.
>
> *Alc.* ii. p. 256.

[2] Aristotle's treatise of the Perihermeniæ was considered by them as a masterpiece of subtlety and ingenuity. It was a common saying, that when he wrote it, he dipped his pen in the human mind:—Acutissimas perihermeniarum scriptitans argumentationes dicitur in mente calamum tinxisse.—Alc. Oper. i. p. 47; ii. p. 350.

equal to that of logic in importance, and still more difficult of attainment. The celebrated St. Aldhelm, though the success of his former attempts had taught him to conceive a favourable notion of his abilities, was overwhelmed with unexpected difficulties, when he first applied himself to the different combinations of numbers; and lamented in forcible language his disappointment and despondency.[1] The reader perhaps will be tempted to smile at the pusillanimity of the monk; but let him pause to reflect on the many disadvantages against which our ancestors were condemned to struggle. The Arabic figures, which the Christians received from the Mohammedans of Spain, about the close of the tenth century, have so facilitated the acquisition of this science, as to render it familiar even to children; but the Saxons were ignorant of so valuable an improvement, and every arithmetical operation was performed with the aid of the seven Roman letters, C, D, I, L, M, V, X.[2] With them, in the solution of long and tedious problems, it was almost impossible to form the necessary combinations; and frequently the embarrassed calculator, instead of employing numerical signs, was compelled to write at length the numbers which he wished to employ. But if he descended to the fractions of integers, his difficulties were multiplied; and the best expedient which human ingenuity had hitherto devised, was, to conceive every species of quan-

[1] Tantæ supputationis imminens desperatio colla mentis oppressit. —(See Aldhelm's letter to Hedda, Malm. p. 339.) He was at last so fortunate as to master every difficulty, and understand even the rules of fractions, calculi supputationes, quas partes numeri appellant.—Ibid.

[2] Bed. Oper. Bas. anno 1563, tom. i. col. 115.

tity divisible into twelve equal parts, the different combinations of which were called by the same names, and computed in the same manner as the uncial divisions of the Roman As.[1] The inconvenience of these methods was severely felt by the learned; and an inadequate remedy was provided, by the adoption of a species of manual arithmetic, in which, by varying the position of the hands and fingers, the different operations were more readily performed. Meanly as we may be inclined to estimate the services of this auxiliary, it deserved and obtained the praise of utility from Beda, who condescended to explain its nature for the use of his countrymen.[2]

When the perseverance of the student had conquered the difficulties of this science, he ventured to apply to the study of natural philosophy. The guides whom he was principally advised to follow, were Aristotle and Pliny; and to the knowledge which he derived from their writings, was added the partial information that might be gleaned from the works of the ecclesiastical writers. Among the philosophical treatises ascribed to Beda there are two, commented by Bridferth, the learned monk of Ramsey, which are undoubtedly genuine, and from which may be formed a satisfactory notion of the proficiency of our ancestors in astronomical and physical knowledge.[3] The reader will not,

[1] Bed. Oper. Bas. anno 1563, tom. i. col. 147.

[2] See Beda's treatise de Indigitatione (tom. i. col. 165). The numbers from 1 to 100 were expressed by the fingers of the left hand; from 100 to 10,000 by those of the right; from 10,000 to 100,000 by varying the position of the left; and from 100,000 to 1,000,000 by varying that of the right hand.

[3] De Natura Rerum, tom. ii. p. 1; De Temporum Ratione, tom. ii. p. 49; and in Dr. Giles's edition, tom. vi. pp. 99, 139. These treatises

perhaps, be displeased if I devote a few pages to this curious subject.

1. The origin of the visible universe had perplexed and confounded the philosophers of ancient times. At each step they sunk deeper into an abyss of darkness and absurdity; and the eternal chaos of the Stoics, the shapeless matter of Aristotle, and the self-existent atoms of Democritus, while they amused their imagination, could only fatigue and irritate their reason. But the Saxon student was guided by an unerring light; and, in the inspired narrative of Moses, he beheld, without the danger of deception, the whole visible world start into existence at the command of an Almighty Creator. Of the scriptural cosmogony, his religion forbade him to doubt; but, in explaining the component parts of sensible objects, he was at liberty to indulge in speculation. With the Ionic school, Beda admitted the four elements: of fire, from which the heavenly bodies derive their light; of air, which is destined for the support of animal existence; of water, which surrounds, pervades, and binds together the globe on which we dwell; and of that heavy inert matter called earth, of which the globe is chiefly composed. To the different combinations of these elements, with the additional aid of the four primary qualities of heat and cold, moisture and dryness, he attributed the various properties of bodies, and the exhaustless fecundity of nature.[1]

are acknowledged by Beda himself, at the end of his Ecclesiastical History (l. v. c. 24). Leland highly admired the commentaries of Bridferth: veluti avidus helluo totum profecto devoravi.—Lel. Comment. de Scrip. Brit. edit. Hall, p. 171.

[1] Bed. de Nat. Rer. c. i.—iv. p. 100, Giles's edition.

2. Pythagoras had taught, though the conclusion was deduced, not from the observation of the phenomena, but from the principles of a fanciful and erroneous theory, that the centre of the world was occupied by the sun, round which the celestial spheres performed their rotations.[1] But the truth of his opinion was repugnant to the daily illusions of the senses; and the majority of philosophers, for many centuries, taught that the earth is suspended in the centre, and equally poised on all sides by the pressure of the revolving universe. Hence they adopted that arrangement of the heavenly bodies which forms the basis of the Ptolemean system; and from them it was received by the Christians, and adjusted, with a few modifications, to their religious opinions. According to Beda, the terrestrial atmosphere is immediately surrounded by the orbits of the seven planets, and the firmament of the fixed stars; on the firmament repose the waters mentioned in the Mosaic cosmogony;[2] and these are again encircled by the highest and ethereal heaven, destined for the residence of the angelic spirits. From the diurnal motion of the stars, which describe concentric circles of a smaller diameter as they approach towards

[1] According to the mysteries of his numerical system, it was necessary that the fiery globe of unity should be placed in the midst of the elements.—See Arist. tom. i. p. 363. Laert. l. viii. 85.

[2] See Genesis (i. 67). "How," exclaims Bridferth of Ramsey, the commentator of Beda's philosophical works, "can the waters rest on the firmament without falling to the earth? I know not," he replies, "but the authority of the Scriptures must silence the objections of reason."—(Glos. in c. viii. p. 9.) The ancient author of the elements of philosophy published under the name of Beda, is justly dissatisfied with this answer, and explains the passage in Genesis, of the waters which are separated by evaporation from the ocean and suspended in the atmosphere.—De Elem. l. ii. p. 320.

the north, he infers that this immense system daily revolves with amazing rapidity round the earth, on an imaginary axis, of which the two extremities are called the northern and southern poles.[1]

3. But what are the stars? From the answer of Beda, that they borrow their brilliancy from the sun, it might perhaps be inferred that he was a disciple of Epicurus, who conceived them to be so many concave mirrors, fixed in the firmament to collect the igneous particles which are scattered through the heavens, and to reflect them on the earth;[2] but his commentator, the monk of Ramsey, informs us, that he considered them as bodies of fire, which emitted a light too feeble to affect the organs of vision, except when it was strengthened by the denser rays of the sun. That they were not extinguished in the morning, and rekindled each evening, as had been taught by Xenophanes, was proved by their appearance during the obscurity of a solar eclipse; and of their influence on the atmosphere no one could remain ignorant, who had remarked the storms that annually attend the heliac rising of Arcturus and Orion, and had felt the heat with which the dogstar scorches the earth.[3]

4. The next step was to the planets. The twofold and opposite motions, by which they seem to be animated, could not escape the notice of an attentive

[1] Bed. de Nat. Rer. c. v.—viii. p. 102. In the Anglo-Saxon Manual recently published by Mr. Wright, we are told that these poles are stars, one in the south, which is never seen, and one in the north, among the seven stars called Carle's waine—evidently our *Charles's* wain at the present day.—Manual, p. 16.

[2] This was one of the opinions of Epicurus.—Laert. l. x. 91.

[3] Bed. de Nat. Rer. c. xi. p. 104.

observer; but to account for them satisfactorily, as long as the earth was supposed immovable, baffled all the efforts of human ingenuity. The Saxons justly considered the natural direction of their orbits to lie from west to east; but conceived that their progress was constantly opposed by the more powerful rotation of the fixed stars, which compelled them daily to revolve round the earth in a contrary direction. In their explanation of the other phenomena, they were equally unfortuate. The ingenious invention of epicycles was unknown, or rejected by them; and they ascribed most of the inequalities observed in the planetary motions to the more or less oblique action of the solar rays, by which they were sometimes accelerated, sometimes retarded, and sometimes entirely suspended.[1] Yet they were acquainted with the important distinction between real and apparent motion. Though they conceived the planetary orbits to be circular, they had learned from Pliny that each possessed a different centre; and thence inferred, that in the perigeum their velocity must be apparently increased, in the apogeum apparently diminished.[2]

5. Among the planets, the first place was justly given to the sun, the great source of light and heat. They described this luminary as a globular mass of fiery particles, preserved in a state of ignition by perpetual rotation. Had it been fixed, says Beda, like the stars in the firmament, the equatorial portion of the earth

[1] Radiis solis præpedita anomala, vel retrograda, vel stationaria fiunt.—(Ibid. xii. 105.) Alcuin states the same. Radii solis, ut veteres voluerunt, inæquales planetarum cursus efficiunt. — Alcuin, ep. lxix. p. 97.

[2] Ibid. c. xiv. p. 106.

would have been reduced to ashes by the intensity of its rays. But the beneficence of the Creator wisely ordained, that it should daily and annually travel round the earth; and thus produce the succession of the night and day, the vicissitudes of the seasons, and the divisions of time. Its daily revolution is completed between midnight and midnight; and is usually divided into twenty-four hours, each of which admits of four different subdivisions, into four points, ten minutes, fifteen parts or degrees, and forty moments.[1] Its annual revolution through the twelve signs of the zodiac, which it divides into two equal parts, forms the solar year, and consists of three hundred and sixty-five days.[2] As it recedes towards the brumal solstice, its rays, in the morning and evening, are intercepted by the convexity of the equator, and their absence prolongs the duration of darkness, and favours the cold of winter; but in proportion as it returns towards the tropic of Capricorn, the days gradually lengthen, and nature seems re-animated by the constant accumulation of heat.[3] But here a rational doubt will occur. If the

[1] Bed. de Temp. Ratione, c. iii. 146. He adds that the calculators of nativities, for greater precision, divided the momentum into sixty ostenta—(p. 127).

[2] Bed. de Nat. Rer. ix. 127; xxxvi. 220, 222. See also a letter from Alcuin to Charlemagne, on the course of the sun through the twelve signs of the zodiac, and the necessity of the leap-year at every fourth revolution.—Op. Alc. i. 93.

[3] Ibid. As Beda has been censured by Feller (Dict. Hist. Art. Virgile) for asserting the earth to be flat, I may be allowed to transcribe a passage, which evidently shows this learned monk to have been well acquainted with the general figure of our globe: "Orbem terræ dicimus, non quod absolute orbis sit forma in tanta montium camporumque disparilitate, sed cujus amplexus, si cuncta linearum comprehendantur ambitu, figuram absoluti orbis efficiat.—(De Nat. Rer. c. xlvi. 118.) The work to which Feller refers is not among the writings of Beda.

rays, which daily warm and illuminate the earth, be emitted from the sun, is there no reason to fear, that after a certain period, the powers of that luminary may be totally exhausted? Beda readily answered, that its losses were quickly repaired, from the numerous exhalations of the ocean, situated under the torrid zone.[1] To feed the sun with water, is an idea which will probably appear ludicrous to the reader; but it originated from the tenets of Thales, the parent of the Grecian philosophy; and had been consecrated by the general adoption of his successors.[2]

6. The regular increase and decrease of the moon have always called attention to the phases of that planet. Respecting its magnitude, the Saxons followed two opposite opinions. Some, on the authority of Pliny, maintained that it was larger; others, with greater truth, conceived that it was smaller, than the earth. Its phases they justly ascribed to the ever-varying position of the illuminated disk;[3] nor were they ignorant that its orbit was subject to several anomalies, which defied the precision of the most exact calculator.[4] Beda explains with sufficient accuracy the causes of the solar and lunar eclipses, and observes, that their recurrence at each conjunction and opposition is prevented by the obliquity of the moon's orbit.[5]

From their insular situation, the Saxons could not

[1] Bed. de Nat. Rer. c. xix. p. 108.
[2] Arist. Met. l. i. c. 3. Cic. de Nat. Deor. l. i. c. 10.
[3] De Nat. Rer. c. xx. 108. De Rat. Temp. xxv.—xxviii. 194—199. Bridferth, 112, 113.
[4] Bed. ibid. xli.—xliv.
[5] De Nat. Rer. c. xxii. xxiii. p. 110. De Temp. Rat. c. xvii. p. 198.

be ignorant of the interesting phenomena of the tides; and Beda seems to have suspected the existence of that cause, the discovery of which has contributed to immortalize the name of Newton. The ebb and flow, he observes, so accurately correspond with the motions of the moon, that he is tempted to believe the waters are attracted towards that planet by some invisible influence, and after a certain time, are permitted to revert to their former situation.[1] He does not, however, venture to speculate on the nature of this attraction, but confines himself to the following enumeration of the particulars, in which the motions of the moon and of the ocean appear to coincide. As the moon daily recedes twelve degrees from the sun, so on an average the tides are daily retarded four lunar points (eight-and-forty minutes) in their approach to the shore.[2] Some days before the conjunction and opposition, they begin to increase; and from the fifth to the twelfth, from the twentieth to the twenty-seventh day, they continually diminish. But the gradations of increase and decrease are not perfectly regular, and these anomalies may be ascribed, perhaps, to the impulse or resistance of the winds, more probably to the agency of some unknown power. The Anglo-Saxon, however, was able to correct one error of former philosophers. It had been pretended, that in every part of the ocean the waters began to rise at the same

[1] Tanquam lunæ quibusdam aspirationibus invitus protrahatur, et iterum ejusdem vi cessante in propriam mensuram refundatur.—Bed. de Rat. Temp. c. xxix. 201. Sim. Dunelm. de Reg. p. 112.

[2] In lunar calculations the hour was divided into five points of twelve minutes each. In quibusdum lunæ computis hora recipit quinque punctos.—Bed. ibid. c. iii. p. 146.

moment; but daily observation authorized him to assert, that on the coast of Bernicia the tide was propagated from the north to the south, and that it reached the mouth of the river Tyne before it washed the coast of the Deiri.[1]

In meteorological science, the fame of Aristotle was long unrivalled; and his four books on meteors have deserved the applause of modern philosophers. To them and the writings of Pliny, the Saxons were indebted for the knowledge which they possessed on this subject. Yet it hardly required the assistance of a master to discover, that the winds are currents of air; that the vapours rise from the earth, coalesce into clouds, and fall in rain; and that in the colder regions of the atmosphere, they sometimes assume the soft form of snow, and at others are, during their descent, congealed into hail;[2] but in explaining the more awful phenomena of lightning and thunder, the genius of Aristotle had failed; and his Saxon disciples, compelled to wander from one hypothesis to another, attributed their production, either to the sudden generation of wind, which burst into fragments the collection of vapours that inclosed it; or to the violent shock of clouds meeting in opposite directions; or to the conflict of the aqueous and igneous particles, which in immense quantities were supposed to float in the atmosphere.[3] The brilliant meteor of the rainbow also

[1] In uno eodemque littore, qui ad Boream mei habitant, multo me citius æstum maris omnem; qui vero ad austrum, multo serius accipere pariter et refundere solent.—Bed. ibid. p. 203.

[2] De Nat. Rer. c. xxvi. 112; xxxii.—xxxv. 114.

[3] Ibid. c. xxviii., xxix. 113. These phenomena had been considered for ages as prognostics of future events; and Beda, at the request of

engaged their attention. Aristotle had considered the drops of rain as so many convex mirrors, which remit the colours, but are too minute to reflect the image of the sun; and his explication was improved by Possidonius, who, to account for its arched appearance, contended that it could be produced only in the bosom of a concave cloud. Beda was satisfied with this hypothesis; and, by his approbation, recommended it to his countrymen, with this unimportant alteration, that he ventured to add the purple to the red, the green, and the blue, the three colours described by the Greek philosophers.[1]

From this view of the state of physical science among the Anglo-Saxons, the reader will have observed, that their knowledge was blended with numerous errors; but his candour will attribute the cause, not to their indolence, but to the ignorance of the times. From Thales to Beda, during the lapse of more than twelve centuries, philosophy had received very few improvements. It was reserved for the learned of more modern times to interrogate nature by experiment. Former students were satisfied when they had observed the more obvious phenomena and hazarded a few conjectures respecting their probable causes. Hence their ingenuity was expended in framing fanciful explications; and each hypothesis sanctioned by the autho-

Herefrid, wrote a short treatise pointing out what might be expected, if it thundered and lightened from the east or west, north or south, or in any particular month of the year, or on any particular day of the week. He is, however, careful to express no belief in these prognostics himself, but to attribute each to ancient tradition, or the experience of observers, or the subtilities of philosophers.—Bed. Oper. vi. p. 343.

[1] Bed. Oper. xxxi. 114.

rity of an illustrious name was received with the veneration due to truth. If the Saxons exercised their own judgment, it was only in adopting the most probable among the contradictory opinions of their predecessors. To invent or improve was not their object. They felt that they were scarcely emerged from the ignorance of barbarism; and, with this feeling, had not the presumption to think that they could discover truths which had escaped the penetration of their masters. To learn whatever had been formerly known, was their great ambition; and this they nearly accomplished. Whoever reads the treatise of Beda De Ratione Temporum, in which he explains the nature of the Egyptian, Grecian, Roman, and Saxon years, must view with astonishment the deep and extensive erudition of a monk who never passed the limits of his native province, but spent the whole of his days among the half-civilized inhabitants of Northumbria.

There was another branch of astronomical learning highly prized by those whom the Saxons looked upon as their masters,—the pretended science of judicial astrology. It had been taught in ancient times, that the heavenly bodies were animated by portions of the Divine Spirit; and experience proved the occurrence of occasional coincidences between certain important events and particular configurations of the planets. Hence it was rashly inferred, that the latter must exercise considerable influence over the destinies of mankind; and a system of computation was gradually invented, by which, if we may believe its admirers, the future lot of individuals might be calculated and fore-

told. Anglo-Saxon scholars could not read the works of the ancient philosophers without becoming acquainted with the principles of this art; and it is probable that they might occasionally exercise it from curiosity, if not from other motives. But it was a forbidden study. The notion that the fortunes of men could be regulated by the motions of the stars was repugnant to the doctrines of religion: Beda pronounced it a false and pernicious art;[1] and Archbishop Egbert subjected to penance all "who believed in the sun and moon, and the course of the stars, and sought prognostics of tides for the beginning of business."[2] Hence, in general, computations of a more useful description occupied the leisure of literary men. From the letters of Alcuin, it appears that he spent a considerable portion of his time in calculating, from the works of the ancients, the orbits of the planets, and in predicting the phenomena of the heavenly bodies; and Beda, in his treatise De Ratione Temporum, accurately explains the rules for computing the age of the moon, its longitude, the hours at which it rises and sets, and the duration of its daily appearance above the horizon. To satisfy the curiosity of those who were ignorant of the science of numbers, this learned monk composed tables, which supplied the place of modern ephemerides; and his example was followed by other philosophers, who were

[1] Bed. de Temp. p. 53.

[2] Hiȝ ȝelẏron on ſunnan ⁊ on monan ⁊ on ſteoppena ſẏne· ⁊ ſecon tiða hpaƀunȝa hẏpa þinȝ to beȝẏnnanne.—(Thorpe, ii. 190.) Aldhelm, indeed, mentions, among his studies at Canterbury, peritia astrologiæ artis, et perplexa horoscopii computatio; but he probably applies these words to studies connected with the twelve signs of the zodiac which he had just mentioned, and to the art of dialling, meant by the horoscopii computatio.—Malm. de Pont. 339; Ang. Sac. ii. p. 7.

accustomed to consult and revise their respective calculations. At the same time they were careful to observe the heavens, and faithfully recorded every new and unexpected appearance.[1]

Cosmography, by which name they understood geographical knowledge, was also a favourite pursuit with the Anglo-Saxon scholars. In addition to the aid which they might derive from the writings of Pliny, Solinus, Mela, and Orosius, they seem to have been in possession of geographical works of a later date, abounding with wondrous tales respecting the inhabitants and productions of different countries. There are two facts which prove how highly this study was prized by Aldfrid, the learned king of Northumbria. Bennet Biscop had brought with him from Rome a collection of cosmographical treatises, "of wonderful workmanship" — a description which probably applied to the beauty of the text, and of the drawings that accompanied it. Aldfrid saw the book, and wished to be its possessor; he offered for it any price at which Bennet might value it; and the abbot consented to part with it in exchange

[1] See Beda de Ratione Temporum (c. xv., xxiii. pp. 95—107), and the letters of Alcuin (Aut. Lec. Can. ii. p. 394. Oper. Alc. i. 90). In 798 according to some chroniclers, in 799 according to others, the planet Mars had been invisible for several months. The northern astronomers seem to have calculated that it would be seen above the horizon in the month of June; they were disappointed, and, to explain their error, supposed that the planet had been retarded in its orbit by the rays of the sun. At length, about the end of July, Alcuin announced to Charlemagne, in rather playful terms, the joyful intelligence that Mars had reappeared; hinting, at the same time, his disbelief in the theory of retardation, and his suspicion that, on account of the inequality of the earth's surface, the rising and setting of the heavenly bodies could not be correctly calculated in high northern latitudes from the data left by philosophers who lived in more southern or eastern climes. See his letter in Canisius, ii. 401. Oper. Alc. i. 97, 98.

for an estate of eight folclands to be settled on his monastery at Jarrow.[1] About the same time, Arculf, a Gallic prelate, who had made the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and in his way back had visited Damascus, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Sicily, was, as he returned to Gaul, carried by a storm among the Western Isles, and after many adventures fell in with Adamnan, the abbot of Iona; to whom, in return for the hospitality which he experienced, he dictated the history of his travels. Adamnan was soon afterwards called by business to the court of Aldfrid, and made to the king a present of the book, in return for which he received several valuable gifts. Aldfrid, though proud of his acquisition, had the liberality to lend it for perusal and transcription among the more learned of his subjects. Hence it came into the hands of Beda, who copied several passages from it into his Ecclesiastical History;[2] and afterwards made still greater use of it in his "Libellus de Locis Sanctis," or Description of the Holy Land.[3]

Thus it was in the north; in the south we find that treatises on cosmography were read with equal avidity. The missionaries, companions of St. Boniface, came from the Anglo-Saxons of the south. From their correspondence we learn that they were careful to take with them to their adopted country copies of the "works of the cosmographers."[4] The travels of

[1] Bed. Op. Min. 155.

[2] Id. Hist. l. v. c. 15, 16, 17.

[3] Smith's Beda, p. 315. Giles, iv. 402. For proofs of Beda's geographical knowledge, may be consulted his treatise De Natura Rerum, c. xlvii., and De Temporum Ratione, c. xxxi., xxxiii.

[4] St. Bonif. Ep. lxxiv. p. 104. Cœna complains to Archbishop Lullus—Libri cosmographicorum necdum nobis ad manum venerunt, nec alia apud nos exemplaria sunt nisi picturis et literis permolesta.

Willibald, noticed in the last chapter, added to their geographical knowledge; and there can be little doubt that the adventures of other pilgrims, some of whom reached even the Christians of St. Thomas, in India, were successively published, and served to keep alive their curiosity. Alfred, amidst the cares of royalty, lost no opportunity of collecting geographical information; and his translation of Orosius has bequeathed to us a very interesting notice of the names and localities of all the tribes inhabiting, in his day, that vast tract of land which stretches from the Northern sea to the Alps, and from the Rhine to the Vistula.[1]

But men of letters among the Anglo-Saxons did not confine their efforts to the mere study of ancient science.

Hence it appears that Cœna had a copy. The writing and drawings were, however, so incorrectly or so clumsily executed, that it was difficult to read it, or understand it; on which account Lullus had promised to furnish a better copy. It is from this passage, in which we meet with the term libri cosmographicorum, and that just before mentioned in Beda, where we have liber cosmographorum, that I conclude that they possessed a *collection* of geographical works.

[1] See his Orosius, published by Daines Barrington, 1773.—It has been said that the Anglo-Saxons neglected the study of law and physic. That, however, they paid great attention to the study of the Roman law, in the more early period of their history, has been shown in a note to the third chapter of this work (vol. i. p. 102, note 1); and health is of too great importance to allow the study of medicine to be neglected in any country. There can be no doubt that the converts were anxious to obtain from their teachers all the medical information in their power; and that they were, in respect of medical knowledge, on an equality with their neighbours. It appears that Theodore taught medicine at Canterbury.—(Bed. Hist. l. v. c. 3.) Beda was acquainted with the works of Hippocrates, whom he terms ἀρχίατρος; and from whose writings he transcribes a long passage, in his work De Ratione Temporum, c. xxx. p. 205. Cyneard, bishop of Winchester, possessed some medical treatises, and wrote to his friend, the archbishop of Mentz, to procure others for him.—(S. Bonif. Epist. lxxiv. p. 104.) Wanley mentions several Anglo-Saxon manuscripts, on medical subjects, still existing in our libraries (pp. 72, 75, 176, 180); and Mr. Wright has lately extracted from such manuscripts much curious and interesting information, in his "Essay on the State of Literature and Learning under the Anglo-Saxons," p. 98.

The desire of diffusing knowledge, or of acquiring reputation, induced several to assume the office of teachers, and to transmit, with their works, their names to posterity. Catalogues of the Saxon writers have been collected by the industry of Leland, Bale, and Pits;[1] but of many we know little more than their names; and the works ascribed to the majority are either lost or spurious. The three, whose superior fame recommends them to the notice of the historian, are St. Aldhelm, Beda, and Alcuin.

I. Of the Saxon monks, the first who distinguished himself by his writings was St. Aldhelm, abbot of Malmesbury, and afterwards bishop of Sherborne. In his youth he had attended the lessons of Maidulf, a Scottish monk; but the superior reputation of the school at Canterbury drew him to that capital, where he studied, with unwearied application, under the abbot Adrian, the companion of Archbishop Theodore. On his return to Malmesbury, he assumed the office of teacher, and wrote and published several works both in prose and verse. His success in Latin prose and Anglo-Saxon poetry has been noticed already; but he was also a votary of the Roman muse, the first, if we may believe him, of English race who had ever felt her inspiration; whence, at an early period of his life, he fearlessly applied to himself the boast of the Mantuan bard:[2]

> Primus ego in patriam mecum, modo vita supersit,
> Aonio rediens deducam vertice Musas.
>
> *Virg. Geor.* iii. 10.

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[1] Since the above was written, Mr. Wright has devoted to the same subject the first volume of his Biographia Britannica Literaria, published under the auspices of the Royal Society of Literature, 1842.

[2] Ang. Sac. ii. p. 4.

The style of his Latin poems, as might be expected from his other compositions, is more characteristic of the Saxon gleeman than of the classic scholar: alternately pompous and homely; occasionally delighting the reader with the beauty of its imagery, often offending him by the utter absence of grace or dignity.[1] His countrymen, however, looked up to him with admiration; nor was his fame confined to the Anglo-Saxons; it quickly spread itself over the neighbouring nations; and foreigners were eager to submit their works to Aldhelm for revision and approbation.[2] He succeeded Maidulf

[1] Mr. Wright, however, has not done justice to St. Aldhelm, in his critique (Biog. Brit. Introd. p. 45); where he instances, as a proof of the poet's bad taste, his story of St. Scholastica, whose pagan brother (so Mr. Wright supposes) was converted to Christianity through the terrors of a miraculous storm, raised at the prayers of the saint. A better poet, we are told, would have described the internal storm, "the qualms which the roaring of the thunder and the flashing of the forked lightnings struck into his breast; but Aldhelm describes a real storm." The fact, however, is, that Scholastica's brother was not a pagan; he was the celebrated St. Benedict, the patriarch of the Western monks. The contest between them was not respecting the truth of Christianity, but concerning a request which she had made. The story is this:—She comes from a distance to visit her brother, and is entertained by him in a house separate from his monastery. After dinner he prepares to depart. She entreats him to stay, but in vain. She then bows her head in prayer; a sudden storm bursts forth, and neither Benedict, nor any one of his companions, dares to quit the house. What in these circumstances had Aldhelm to describe but a real storm?

Tum virgo Christum pulsabat voce benignum,
Ut sibi dignetur vulnus sanare doloris.
Mox igitur cœlum nimboso turbine totum,
Et convexa poli nigrescunt: æthere fulvo
Murmura vasta sonant, flammis commista coruscis:
Et tremuit tellus magno fremebunda fragore.
Humida roriferis humectant vellera guttis,
Irrigat et terram tenebrosis imbribus aer,
Mansit et ille volens, qui pridem sponte negabat.
Bib. Pat. viii. p. 16. *Col. Agrip.*

The story is told at length in St. Gregory's Dialogues, cap. xxxiii., whence Aldhelm took it.

[2] His works possessed a high reputation in Spain (Mab. Annal.

in the government of the abbey, and on the death of Headdi, bishop of Winchester, was promoted to the new bishopric of Sherborne; but whether he was abbot or bishop, he never relinquished his favourite occupation of teaching. Aldhelm was a man of the strictest virtue and the most fervent piety; and in his writings, as in his conduct, had always the same object in view,—to promote the worship of God and the sanctification of his neighbour. The following letter, which he wrote to one of his former pupils, will enable the reader to form some notion of his personal character:—

"To Æthilwald, my most beloved son and disciple, Aldhelm, the last of the servants of God, greeting.—When you were with me, I used to admonish you in words; now that you are absent, I advise you by letter; presuming on that paternal authority over you, with which God hath invested me; for, as the apostle saith, *it is the charity of Christ that urgeth us.*

"Let not then, my beloved, young though you are, the vain pleasures of the world enslave you: such as the custom of daily junketings, indulgence in long and immoderate entertainments, continued riding and racing, or the loathful pursuit of sensual gratifications. Bear always in mind the text, *Youth and pleasure are vain.* Never suffer yourself to be made a slave to the love of money, or of secular glory, or of that vain parade which is so hateful to God; remembering always the words of Christ, *What profiteth it a man, if he gain the whole world, but lose his own soul? For*

Bened. ii. p. 25); and Scottish scholars sent their compositions to him, ut perfecti ingenii lima scabredo eradicaretur Scottica.—Ang. Sac. ii. p. 4.

the Son of Man will come in his glory, and that of his angels, and will render to every one according to his works. Rather, my beloved, devote your time to the reading of the Scriptures, or to holy prayer; and if, in addition, you wish to acquire some knowledge of secular learning, do it, but only with this view, that, since the meaning of every, or of almost every, part of the divine law, dependeth on the rules of grammar, you may be the better able to dive into the deep and sacred signification of the text, by your more perfect acquaintance with those forms of elocution in which it is expressed.—Let, moreover, this letter of mine always have its place before your eyes, among the books which you read. It will then supply my absence and constantly remind you of the advice which I give you. Farewell." [1]

Aldhelm died in 709, the fifth year of his episcopacy, on the 25th of May. Of his works, mentioned by Beda and Malmesbury, several have perished; but the principal, his Praise of Virginity, in prose and verse, his Enigmata and shorter poems, and a few letters,

[1] Anglia Sacra, ii. p. 5. Among the letters of St. Boniface, may be seen a letter from this very Æthilwald to Aldhelm, in language as magniloquent as ever flowed from the pen of his master.—(Ep. lxv. p. 76.) With it he also sends several pieces of poetry in honour of Aldhelm, whom he calls Cassis Priscus, or old helmet. Two at least of these, probably four, are published after letter lxix. p. 82.

Vale, vale, fidissime,
Phile Christi charissime,
Quem in cordis cubiculo
Cingo amoris vinculo;
Ave, ave, altisime,
Olim sodes sanctissime,
Salutate supplicibus
Æthiwaldi cum vocibus.

Ibid. p. 91.

still exist, and have been repeatedly published. By the fastidious critic they may be held in contempt; but the man who considers the barbarism of the preceding generation, and the difficulties with which the Saxon student at that early period had to struggle, will not refuse to their author the praise of industry, and talent, and learning.

II. While the people of Wessex gloried in the fame of Aldhelm, another and still greater scholar was gradually rising into notice from an obscure corner of Northumbria. The reader is aware that, on the return of Bennet Biscop from his fourth pilgrimage to Rome, in 672, King Egfrid had bestowed upon him an estate of seventy folclands at the mouth of the river Wear. Shortly afterwards,[1] on one of these folclands[2] was born a boy named Beda; the same to whom, in honour of his services to religion and literature, posterity has since allotted the epithet of "the venerable." Of his parentage we know nothing. At the age of seven he

[1] From the comparison of two passages in the last chapter of his History, it appears that Beda had reached his fifty-ninth year in 731. It follows, of course, that he was born in 673.

[2] According to Beda, he was born in territorio ejusdem monasterii (Hist. l. v. c. 24), a term applicable to any one of the folclands. Alfred translates it, "on sunderland of the same monastery:" on ȝunðeɒlonðe þæȝ ylcan mynȝeȝ. We are told that "sunderland" means lands set apart for some particular monastery or proprietor. It may be so: but in its original signification it means land sundered or cut off; and I cannot find any place in England, retaining that name, which does not evidently show that it was so called from its situation being cut off, or sundered from other land, by the interposition of water. Hence, I suggested the sunderland opposite to the monastery, but sundered from it by the river, as likely to be the place alluded to by Alfred. Butler, in his Life of Beda (vol. v. May 27), says that the spot on which he was born was covered by the sea before the time of the historian Simeon. If this be true, it may have been some other tongue of land, or a prolongation of the present, on which the sea is yearly making encroachment.

was delivered by "his family" to the care of Bennet,[1] who had now completed his monastery of St. Peter; and soon afterwards by Bennet to his coadjutor Ceolfrith, with whom Beda migrated to Jarrow; being one of the colony of twenty monks old and young, "tonsured and untonsured," that accompanied him to lay the foundation of the new monastery of St. Paul. There he appears to have been in the year 686, when the pestilence swept away every monk instructed in the choral service, with the exception of Ceolfrith and one "little boy," who still contrived, in the midst of their tears and sorrows, to chant the canonical hours;[2] and it was in the same monastery that he continued to reside during the remaining forty-nine years of his life. Endowed with talent, and desirous of excellence, he applied with eagerness to his studies under the eye of Ceolfrith; and at the age of nineteen, whether it was his superior merit, or some urgent necessity, that justified this anticipation of the age prescribed by the

[1] Cura propinquorum datus sum educandus—(Bed. l. v. c. 24.) This circumstance may be elucidated from a similar occurrence in the history of St. Boniface (Wynfrith), the apostle of Germany. Wynfrith often said that he wished to be educated among the monks of a neighbouring monastery. When he was *seven* years old, his father, who was confined by sickness to the house, consulted his *kinsfolk*, and sent them with him to the abbot, before whom the boy, in language which had been suggested to him beforehand, solicited to be admitted into the monastery. The abbot then assembled the monks, received their consent, and took the young Wynfrith, as his adopted son, under his care. See the Life of St. Boniface by St. Willibald, c. i. ii.

[2] Hist. Abb. Gyrvensium, in Oper. Min. Bed. p. 323. I conceive this little boy—puerulus—to have been Beda himself—Qui a Ceolfrido nutritus et eruditus, nunc usque in eodem monasterio presbyterii gradum tenens, jure actus ejus laudabiles cunctis scire volentibus et scripto commendat et fatu.—(Ibid.) Beda, when he wrote his history of the abbots, had plainly this narrative before him, but makes no mention of the circumstance.

canons, was ordained deacon by John, called afterwards of Beverley, bishop of Hexham.

In the year 700, the abbot of Ceolfrith sent a deputation of his monks to Rome, the bearers of a present to Pope Sergius, and of a request, that he would grant, in favour of the lands recently acquired by the monastery, a charter of protection, similar to that which had been granted by Pope Agatho to its founder, Bennet Biscop. They were graciously received, obtained the object of their petition, and returned in the following year with a letter from the pontiff to the abbot, requesting him to send to Rome a certain learned monk of his monastery, to join in the discussion of some important questions, which required the aid of men of "research and erudition." It has generally been said that this monk was Beda; and it is possible that the character drawn of him by his brethren in Rome may have induced Sergius to solicit his presence; but when it is considered that Beda at the time was a young man of seven-and-twenty, that he had not yet been advanced to the priesthood, and that he was unknown to the public by any literary composition, we may reasonably pause before we pitch upon him as the scholar whose presence and advice was an object of importance to the Roman pontiff.[1]

However that may be, it is certain that Beda, instead of proceeding to Rome, remained at Jarrow, buried in his studies, or occupied with the duties of his profession. These two formed the great pleasure of his life. "Amid," says he, "the observance of regular discipline, and the daily duty of chanting the service in

[1] See note (K).

the church, to be learning, or teaching, or writing, was my continual delight."[1] With no other aid than was afforded by the library of the monastery, and the books lent to him by his friends, his ardent and comprehensive mind embraced every science which was then studied, and raised him by degrees to a high pre-eminence over all his contemporaries. Still, had he listened to the suggestions of his own modesty, his learning and his name would probably have been lost to posterity: but in 703 he was ordained priest, and then both his abbot and his bishop commanded him to write for the instruction of his countrymen. He obeyed, and for thirty years employed his pen in the composition of works, almost all of which have come down to us at the present day.[2] We find among them elementary introductions to several sciences, treatises on astronomy and chronology, homilies, biographical notices of the abbots of his own monastery, lives of saints, and commentaries on many of the books of Scripture. But the most celebrated of his writings is his Ecclesiastical History of the Anglo-Saxons. The project was originally suggested by Albin, abbot of St. Augustine's, in Can-

[1] Inter observantiam disciplinæ regularis et quotidianam cantandi in ecclesia curam, semper aut discere, aut docere, aut scribere, dulce habui.—(Hist. l. v. c. 24.) He was minutely exact in performance of every duty, particularly that of the choral chant (Alc. Oper. i. p. 282); yet he acknowledges that these duties were a great drawback on his studies—innumera monasticæ servitutis retinacula.—Ep. ad Accam, Oper. i. 179.

[2] Of the works of Beda recorded in his catalogue, some have been lost, the larger and more valuable portion has been preserved. In the Paris, Basle, and Cologne editions they have been mixed up with a multitude of writings by unknown authors, to which his name had been affixed by the presumption or dishonesty of copyists. But a carefully collated edition of his genuine works in twelve volumes octavo is now in the course of publication under the care of Dr. Giles.

terbury, and a disciple of Theodore and Adrian. All the English prelates approved of the design, and communicated to the historian all the information within their reach; and with the same view Gregory III. permitted the records of the Apostolic See to be examined by Nothelm, a presbyter of the church of London.[1] At its completion it was received by the public with universal applause. Succeeding generations preserved it piously as a memorial of the virtue of their ancestors; and Alfred the Great translated it into the Anglo-Saxon tongue for the instruction of those who could not read it in the original. To us it is an invaluable work; for without it we should know nothing of the missionaries who brought to our pagan ancestors the light of the gospel, or of the manners of the clergy, or the worship and rites of the infant church. The style is easy and perspicuous; and, though far inferior to that of the great masters of antiquity, may justly claim higher praise than any other specimen of the age. To some readers the credulity of the writer with respect to miracles will appear

[1] Bed. Hist. Prol. p. 34. We have the letter which he sent with the first copy of his history to Albinus, not as a gift—for copies were then too rare—but for transcription. Desideratissimo et reverentissimo patri Albino, Beda Christi famulus salutem. Gratantissime suscepi munuscula tuæ dilectionis, quæ per venerabilem fratrem nostrum Nothelmum presbyterum mittere dignatus es, et maxime literas quibus me jam secunda vice in ecclesiastica gentis nostræ historia, ad quam me scribendam jamdudum instigaveras, creber adjuvare et instituere curasti. Propter quod et ipse tibi rectissime eandem historiam, mox ut consummare potui, ad transcribendum transmisi. . . . Teque, amantissime pater, supplex obsecro, ut pro mea fragilitate cum his, qui tecum sunt, famulis Christi, apud pium judicem sedulus intercedere memineris; sed et eos ad quos eadem nostra opuscula pervenire feceris, hoc idem facere monueris. Bene vale, semper amantissime in Christo, pater optime.—Bed. Oper. Min. p. 229.

a blemish; but no one can doubt his candour and veracity, nor rise from his pages without feeling himself pleased and edified with that spirit of unaffected piety which pervades and animates his narrative.

Beda finished this great work in 731. Three years afterwards he visited Archbishop Egbert in his monastery at York "for the sake of reading," and promised that prelate to repeat his visit in the following year. But his health would not then suffer him to remove from Jarrow, and he sent to Egbert a long and interesting letter on the reformation of his diocese, a letter which still exists, a valuable monument of the zeal and prudence of this learned monk.[1] His infirmities now continued to increase; and about the following feast of Easter it became evident that he was rapidly sinking into the grave. His last moments are graphically described by Cuthbert, one of his disciples who was present, in a letter to a fellow-pupil Cuthwin, residing at the time in a distant monastery. Cuthwin had written for information; and Cuthbert returns the following answer:—

"To his most beloved in God, and fellow-reader Cuthwin, Cuthbert his fellow-pupil wisheth health in God for ever.

"I received with pleasure the present which you sent me, and perused with satisfaction the letter of your devout reverence. For it informed me of that which I most earnestly hoped for,—that masses and holy prayers are diligently performed in your monastery for Beda, the beloved of God, the father and master of us both. I feel, then, the greater pleasure, on account of my love

[1] Bed. Oper. Min. p. 207.

for him, to describe briefly, and to the best of my ability, in what manner he departed this life; the more so, as this is what you particularly request.

"About a fortnight before the feast of Easter (Ap. 17), he was reduced to a state of great debility, with difficulty of breathing, but without much pain; and in that condition he lasted till the day of the Lord's Ascension, the seventh before the calends of June (May 26).[1] This time he passed cheerfully and joyfully, giving thanks to Almighty God both by day and night, or rather at all hours of the day and night. He continued to deliver lessons to us daily, spending the rest of his time in psalmody, and the night also in joy and thanksgiving, unless he were interrupted by a short sleep; and yet, even then, the moment he awaked he began again, and never ceased with outstretched hands[2] to return thanks to God. I

[1] Mr. Wright tells us that "the date of Beda's death is accurately fixed in the year 735, by the circumstance that in that year the feast of the Ascension fell upon the twenty-*seventh* of May (Biog. Lit. p. 268); and Mr. Soames, in the recent Supplement to his History, and on the authority of this passage, asserts that "Beda's death certainly took place May 27, 735. He died on Holy Thursday and May 27. These two requisites for fixing the date occurred in 735."—(Supplem. p. 50.) The mistake is most singular. He died, according to Cuthbert, on Holy Thursday "septimo Calendas Junii," which most certainly answers to May the twenty-sixth in our calendar; in 735 Easter-day fell on April 17 (L'Art de vérifier les Dates, Table Chron. p. 15), whence Holy Thursday must have fallen on May 26; and even Gehle, the authority to which Mr. Wright refers, has—ipso Ascensionis festo et vii Kalendas Junias (die 26 Maji n. a.) obiit; diem autem Ascensionis Dominicæ et septimum Kalendas Junii in annum 735 concurrisse ex tabulis astronomicis notum est.—Gehle, p. 31.

[2] Expansis manibus—with out-stretched hands. This had been from the beginning the usual posture at prayer among Christians, and was adopted in honour of the crucifixion of Christ. It is thus noticed by Tertullian—Non attollimus tantum manus, sed etiam expandimus, e Dominica passione modulatum, et orantes confitemur Christo.—(Tert. de Orat. c. xi. p. 131.) This gesture is still retained by the priest during great part of the mass.

can declare with truth, that I never saw with my eyes, nor heard with my ears, of any man who was so indefatigable in giving thanks to the living God.

"O truly happy man! He chanted the passage from the blessed Apostle Paul—'It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God' (Heb. x. 31), and several other passages from Holy Writ, warning us to throw off all torpor of soul, in consideration of our last hour. And being conversant with Anglo-Saxon poetry, he repeated several passages, and composed the following lines in our tongue." (Here follow ten lines of poetry, meaning that no one can begin too early to consider what account of his life he will be able to render at his death.[1])

"He also chanted the antiphons according to his and our custom.[2] One of these is—'O king of glory, Lord of hosts, who on this day didst ascend in triumph above all the heavens, leave us not orphans, but send upon us the Spirit of truth, the promised of the Father. Alleluia.'—When he came to the words, 'leave us not orphans,' he burst into tears and wept much; and after a while he resumed where he had broken off, and we who heard him wept with him. We wept and studied by turns; or rather wept all the time that we studied.

"Thus we passed in joy the quinquagesimal days till the aforesaid festival;[3] and he rejoiced greatly, and

[1] See them in note (I).

[2] I conceive that by these words, his and our custom, Cuthbert alludes to the difference in the choral services; the Roman course having been introduced at Wearmouth and Jarrow, and the Scottish being probably retained in Cuthwin's monastery. The antiphon in the letter is that for the Magnificat on the feast of the Ascension according to the Roman course.

[3] The quinquagesimal days were the fifty days between Easter and

gave thanks to God for the infirmities under which he suffered, often repeating 'God scourgeth every son whom he receiveth' (Heb. xii. 6), with other passages of Scripture, and the saying of St. Ambrose—'I have not lived so as to be ashamed to live among you, nor do I fear to die, for we have a gracious God.'

"During these days, besides the lessons which he gave us, and the chant of the psalms, he undertook the composition of two memorable works, that is, he translated into our language the gospel of St. John as far as —*But what are these among so many?* &c. (John vi. 9) —and made a collection of extracts from the notes of Isidore, the bishop, saying, 'I will not suffer my pupils to read falsehoods, and labour without profit in that book, after my death.' But on the Tuesday[1] before the Ascension his difficulty of breathing began to distress him exceedingly, and a slight tumour appeared in his feet. He spent the whole day, and dictated to us with cheerfulness, saying occasionally, 'Lose no time. I know not how long I may last. Perhaps in a very short time my Maker may take me.'—In fact, it seemed to us that he knew the time of his death. He lay awake the whole night praising God: and at dawn on the Wednesday morning ordered us to write quickly,

Whitsunday, and were ordered to be kept as days of joy and triumph in honour of the Resurrection.

[1] Feria tertia.—(Cuthb.) Mr. Soames, taking this day to be Holy Thursday itself, has crowded all the facts which follow in Cuthbert's narrative into the short space of one day (Hist. p. 102); Mr. Wright, however, divides them between two days, telling us that this was Wednesday, the twenty-sixth, and, therefore, allotting to Wednesday the occurrences which took place on Tuesday, and to Thursday, or the feast of the Ascension, those which took place on Wednesday, the last of the three Rogation days.—(Biog. Lit. p. 267.) But the "feria tertia" was, in fact, the third day of the week, or Tuesday, and the twenty-fourth day of the month, not the twenty-sixth.

which we did, till the hour of tierce (nine o'clock). At that hour we walked in procession with the relics, as the rubric for the day prescribed ;[1] but one of us remained to wait on him, and said to him, 'Dearest master, there still remains one chapter unwritten. Will it fatigue you if I ask more questions?' 'No,' said Beda, 'take your pen and mend it, and write quickly.' This he did.

"At none (three in the afternoon) he said to me, 'I have some valuables in my little chest,—pepper, handkerchiefs, and incense. Run quickly and bring the priests of the monastery to me, that I may make to them such presents as God hath given to me. The rich of this world give gold and silver and other things of value: I will give to my brethren what God hath given to me, and will give it with love and pleasure.' I shuddered, but did as he had bidden. He spoke to each one in his turn, reminding and entreating them to celebrate masses, and to pray diligently for him,[2] which all readily promised to do.

"When they heard him say that they would see him no more in this world, all burst into tears; but their tears were tempered with joy when he said, 'It is time that I return to Him who made me out of nothing. I have lived long, and kindly hath my merciful Judge forecast the course of my life for me. The time of my dissolution is at hand. I wish to be released, and to be with Christ.'—In this way he continued to speak cheerfully till sunset, when the forementioned youth said, 'Beloved master, there is still one sentence

[1] That is, the rubric for the Wednesday in Rogation week.

[2] This, according to Mr. Turner, means that "he exhorted them to attend to their masses and prayers!"—Turn. iii. 443.

unwritten.' 'Then write quickly,' said Beda. In a few minutes the youth said, 'It is finished.' 'Thou hast spoken truly,' replied Beda; 'take my head between thy hands, for it is my delight to sit opposite to that holy place in which I used to pray; let me sit and invoke my Father.' Sitting thus on the pavement of his cell, and repeating, 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,'—as he finished the word 'Ghost,' he breathed his last, and took his departure for Heaven.[1]

"All who saw him die, declare that they never beheld any man close his life in so devout and tranquil a frame of mind; for as long as the breath was in his body he never ceased to repeat the Gloria Patri, with other religious expressions, nor to give praise with expanded hands to the true and living God. Know, however, beloved brother, that I have much more to relate of him, but my want of skill in composition obliges me to be brief. I intend, however, at some future time to write more fully what I have seen with my eyes and heard with my ears."[2]

[1] It is plain from this narrative that Beda died not long after sunset of the day the events of which have just been described. Now that day was the Wednesday of the Rogation week. How then could he be said to have died on Holy Thursday, the feast of the Ascension? If the reader turn to the first volume (p. 285), he will see that, according to the computation at that time, the day ended at sunset, and that the next day began with the evening immediately after sunset. Hence, if Beda lived only an hour after Wednesday's sunset, he would be said to have died on the evening of Thursday, and on the feast of the Ascension, because that feast was already begun. It is probably from inattention to this manner of computation, that different opinions have been adopted by writers respecting the time and year of his death.

[2] This letter has been repeatedly printed, but most correctly by Mr. Stevenson (Introduction to Beda's History, p. xiv.), and by Dr. Giles (Beda's Works, vol. i. p. clxiii.). See note (K) on the time of Beda's death.

The reputation of Beda survived and grew after his death. The Saxons were proud that their nation had produced so eminent a writer; the monks of Wearmouth and Jarrow were harassed with solicitations for copies of his works;[1] and, at the distance of a hundred years, the prelates of the Franks, in the council of Aix-la-Chapelle, numbered him among the Fathers of the church, and styled him the venerable and admirable doctor.[2] If the improvements of modern times have diminished the value of his writings, this circumstance ought no more to detract from his merit than it does from that of the philosophers of Greece and Rome. Beda was a great man for the age in which he lived; he would have been so had he lived in any other age.

III. The loss which Anglo-Saxon literature had suffered by the death of Beda was quickly repaired by

[1] See Epistles of St. Boniface, pp. 12, 13, 120, 124, 130, 152, 155, 231. These letters from Boniface and Lullus, his successor, to Egbert, archbishop of York, and to Bishop Cœna, also to Hwetbert and Cuthbert, abbots of Wearmouth, spread over the next fifty years after the death of Beda, and show how difficult it was during that period to procure a single copy of most of the works of the Northumbrian monk: so slow was the process of publication, as long as copies could be multiplied only by transcription in monasteries. From a remark in one of Cuthbert's letters, it would appear that the severity of the winter often interrupted the labours of the copyists—præsentia præteritæ hyemis horribiliter insulam nostræ gentis in frigore et gelu et ventorum et imbrium procellis diu lateque depressit; ideoque scriptoris manus, ne in plurimorum numerum perveniret, retardata est.—(Ibid. p. 124.) In the same letter he indulges in an honest pride, that so great a man as Beda should have been of English race.—Et rectum mihi videtur, ut tota gens Anglorum in omnibus provinciis, ubicunque reperti sunt, gratias Deo referant, quia tam mirabilem virum præditum diversis donis, tamque ad exercenda dona studiosum, similiterque in bonis moribus viventem, Deus illis in sua natione donavit, quia per experimentum, ad pedes ejus nutritus, hoc quod narro, didici.—Ibid.

[2] Quid venerabilis, et modernis temporibus doctor admirabilis, Beda presbyter sentiat, videamus.—(Con. Aquisgran. ii. præf. l. iii.) Does not this passage suggest an answer to the question why he was called the "Venerable"?

the abilities of Alcuin. Alcuin was descended from an illustrious family, and was born, probably before the year 740, within the walls or in the vicinity of York.[1] The great school in that city had lately attained a high degree of reputation through the exertions of Archbishop Egbert, a prelate who, under the tuition of Beda, had imbibed a passion for learning; and who, notwithstanding his royal birth and elevated station, was proud to impart the rudiments of knowledge to the noble youths that were educated in the Episcopal Monastery.[2] To him Alcuin was intrusted at an early age by his parents, and by him was transferred to the more immediate care of Ælbert, then the head master of his school, and afterwards his successor in the archbishopric. The young pupil, by his talents and docility, and virtues, soon won the affection of both the prelate and the preceptor; he was chosen by the latter to accompany him in his pilgrimage to Rome;[3] and when

[1] As a descendant of the same family with St. Willibrord, he inherited the monastery of St. Mary, built by the father of that missionary, near the mouth of the Humber.—(Annal. Bened. tom. ii. p. 322, Op. ii. 184.) In the poem on the Saints of York, the author describes himself as a native of that city (v. 16, 165). There is sufficient internal evidence that this poem should be assigned to the pen of Alcuin. It mentions no person or fact posterior to the departure of Alcuin from York; and the insertion of his name among the authors whose works were preserved in the library may be attributed to the mistake of some copier. It occurs in the list of the poets; a place to which it had little claim.

[2] The manner in which Egbert instructed his disciples has been noticed already in vol. i. p. 89.

[3] This appears to follow from casual hints in Alcuin's works. In his youth he was in Rome—adolescens Romam perrexi.—(Oper. i. p. 126, ep. lxxxv.) He was at Corbie in the suite of his master—Magistrum meum secutus.—(Ibid. p. 286, ep. ccxxii.) His master was also in Rome—

Hic quoque Romuleam venit devotus ad urbem.
De Pont. Ebor. v. 1457.

Ælbert ascended the archiepiscopal throne, was appointed to replace him in the office of teaching. His success in this new station justified the partiality of his friend. The reputation of the Northumbrian school spread over the Continent; and students from Gaul and Germany crowded to York, that they might profit by the lectures of the Anglo-Saxon.[1]

Alcuin never forfeited the esteem of Ælbert. He was sent by him on a mission of some importance to the court of Charles, afterwards called Charlemagne; was appointed by him to superintend, in company with Eanbald, the erection of a new and magnificent cathedral at York; and by his will was intrusted with the care of "the most valuable of his treasures," the numerous volumes which he had collected in different journeys to Gaul and Italy.[2]

To procure the pallium for Eanbald, the next archbishop, Alcuin again visited Rome, in 781; and in his return, at Parma, was introduced a second time to Charlemagne. That prince was then in the zenith of his power. But to the glory of a conqueror he was desirous to add the fame of a patron of learning; and,

[1] Eo tempore in Eboraica civitate famosus merito scholam magister Alchuinus tenebat, undecunque ad se confluentibus de magna sua scientia communicans. — Vit. S. Liudgeri in Act. Bened. sæc. iv. tom. i. p. 37.

[2] Caras super omnia gazas.—(Alc. de Pont. Ebor. Eccl. v. 1525.) Thesauri sapientiæ in quibus me magister meus Helbertus Archiepiscopus hæredem reliquit.—(Ep. l. p. 64.) Alcuin thus laments the death of his patron:—

> "O pater, O pastor, vitæ spes maxima nostræ,
> Te sine nos ferimur turbata per æquora mundi,
> Te duce deserti variis involvimur undis,
> Incerti qualem mereamur tangere portum.
> Sidera dum lucent, trudit dum nubila ventus,
> Semper honos, nomenque tuum, laudesque manebunt."
>
> *Ibid.* v. 1596.

as the revival of literature in his extensive dominions had long engaged his attention, he seized the favourable moment to solicit the assistance of the Anglo-Saxon in so laudable a project. The ambition of Alcuin was awakened; and he promised to return, if the king of Northumbria and the archbishop of York should give their consent. It was given, and the promise was fulfilled in 782.[1] Charles immediately enrolled himself in the number of his disciples; every nobleman and clergyman, who courted the favour of the prince followed his example; and distinction in the school of Alcuin became the surest path to civil and ecclesiastical honours. From the palace the spirit of improvement diffused itself over the more distant provinces; laws were published for the encouragement of learning; schools were opened in the principal of the clerical and monastic establishments; and the efforts of the Anglo-Saxon, seconded by the influence of his patron, restored the empire of learning in Gaul and Germany.[2]

Another object which engaged the attention of Alcuin was the correction of the liturgical books, which in

[1] Vit. Alc. in Act. Bened. sæc. iv. tom. i. p. 153. Alcuin alludes to the same event in one of his letters to Charles:—"Ex diversis mundi partibus amatores illius vestræ bonæ voluntatis convocare studuistis. Inter quos me etiam infimum ejusdem sanctæ sapientiæ vernaculum de ultimis Britanniæ finibus adsciscere curastis."—Oper. i. 150, ep. ci.

[2] A German poet has thus expressed his gratitude to Alcuin and his countrymen:—

"Hæc tamen arctois laus est æterna Britannis.
Illa bonas artes et Graiæ munera linguæ
Stellarumque vias, et magni sidera cœli
Observans, iterum turbatis intulit oris.
Quid non Alcuino facunda Lutetia debes?

Apud Camden, tom. i. p. 166.

most churches were disgraced with numerous errors. These errors arose partly from the negligence, partly from the ignorance, of the transcribers, who frequently understood not the language of the document before them, and, while they faithfully copied the mistakes of their predecessors, frequently added new mistakes of their own. Alcuin began with the *Comes*, or book of Gospels and Epistles for all the Sundays and festivals in the year, restoring the true reading where it had been depraved, and introducing throughout one uniform system of accentuation and punctuation; "so that even the less learned might be able to read in public currently and correctly, without danger of placing the emphasis on the wrong syllable, or of confounding the close of one sentence with the commencement of the following." The success of this attempt, and the applause with which it was received, encouraged him to proceed to a second, of greater labour and importance, to a revision in the same manner of all the books of the Old and the New Testaments. It occupied him some years; but he was at last enabled to forward a copy, free, as he hoped, from almost every error, as a present to Charlemagne, when that prince was crowned at Rome in the year 800.[1] At the same time he sought to improve the art of transcribing; laid it down for a rule that no man should be employed in that office who did not possess a competent knowledge of grammar and orthography; and composed a treatise on each of those subjects for the use of copyists.[2]

[1] Oper. Alc. i. 154, 248.
[2] Frob. Vit. Alc. c. vi. No. 67, 70, 74. Oper. ii. 263.

Charles was not ungrateful to his teacher. Aware of the value of his services, he retained him for years in his court, honoured him with peculiar distinction, and gave to him at an early period two valuable benefices, the abbey of St. Loup at Troyes, and that of Ferrieres in the Gatinois. To these was added the small monastery of St. Josse, near Cwentavic or Estaples, that the Anglo-Saxon might there exercise hospitality towards his countrymen on their arrival in France, or their departure from it.[1] But neither favour nor presents could wean the affection of Alcuin from Britain. He still considered himself an honourable exile; he was bound, so he argued, by his ordination to the church of York; and he frequently, but ineffectually, solicited the permission to revisit his native country. The reluctance of Charles was not to be softened by entreaties; at last it was subdued by political considerations.

The French monarch had commissioned Gerwold, the abbot of Fontanelles, and collector of the customs,[2] to negotiate a marriage between his son Charles and a daughter of Offa, king of Mercia. The pride of the Mercian might have been flattered by the alliance of so potent a sovereign; but he determined to treat on a footing of equality, and in return demanded, as the price of his consent, the hand of a French princess for his son Offa. Charles was irritated at the manner in which his proposal had been received; all friendly in-

[1] Cwentavic was at that time the port chiefly frequented by the Anglo-Saxon pilgrims, messengers, and merchants.—Edd. Vit. Wilf. c. xxiv. p. 64. Chron. Fontanel. c. xv.

[2] Fontanelles was an abbey in the diocese of Rouen, afterwards called St. Wandrille's; but Gerwold collected the customs at Cwentavic.

tercourse between the two courts was suspended; and the merchants of each prince were respectively forbidden to trade with those of the other. It is probable that the interests of Gerwold suffered from this interruption of commerce. He artfuly contrived to mollify the resentment of his sovereign; and Alcuin was selected to be the bearer of friendly proposals to Offa.[1] Though we have no positive proof, it can hardly be doubted that he actually executed this commission. Certain it is that he visited England at this period, and that peace and amity were restored between the two nations.[2]

Alcuin was in no haste to leave his countrymen; nor did he, though repeatedly urged by messages from the king, return to France before the end of the year 792, or the beginning of the next. He was received with honour by his patron; resumed his favourite occupation of teaching at court; and attended with several of his countrymen at the council of Frankfort in 794, where the novel doctrines of Elipandus were condemned.[3] But, as age, and the infirmities of age, grew upon him, he felt anxious to withdraw from the dissipation of the palace, and to enjoy again the tranquillity which he had tasted in his former retirement at York.

[1] I have been rather circumstantial in relating this affair, as the cause of the dissension between Charlemagne and Offa has eluded the diligence of our national historians, from Malmesbury to Mr. Turner. It is related by the chronicler of Fontanelles, in his account of the abbot Gerwold.—(Chron. Fontanel. c. 15. Annal. Bened. tom. ii. p. 287.) The same is stated by Froben (Op. Alc. i. xxxvii.). Alcuin mentions the report that he was to be sent to Offa, in his letter to Colcus, apud Malm. de Reg. l. i. c. 4, f. 17.

[2] Charlemagne's letters to Offa, after their reconciliation, may be seen in Malmesbury.—Ibid.

[3] In his letter to Elipandus, the king states that he had sent to Britain for certain clergymen to attend this council (Op. Alc. ii. p. 583); and in the last canon, Alcuin is recommended by him to the Fathers, to be admitted by them in suo consortio sive in orationibus.

Had he been able to obtain the consent of Charles, it was his intention to end his days among his brethren, the clergy of that city;[1] and when this was refused, he requested permission to retire to the monastery which his countryman St. Boniface had founded at Fulda.[2] But Fulda was at too great a distance from the royal residence; and in 796, on the death of Ithier, abbot of St. Martin's, at Tours, the king appointed Alcuin his successor. It was the most wealthy abbey, the first in dignity in France. The duty of reforming the discipline of that establishment, and of introducing among its inmates his new course of studies, was a sufficient reason why Alcuin should make it his place of residence; still he enjoyed not the seclusion which he coveted. The administration of his abbeys involved him in cares and lawsuits: Charles frequently called him to his court; and in 799 he was summoned to the council at Aix-la-Chapelle, to oppose Felix of Urgel, the great patron of the new doctrine respecting the adoption of Christ. The controversy between them lasted six days, in the presence of the king and the prelates; at the close of which, Felix acknowledged that he was vanquished, and retracted his former opinion.[3] This was a propitious moment for Alcuin; and he improved it to

[1] Malm. de Reg. l. i. c. 3. In a letter to the clergy of York, Alcuin thus expresses himself:—Ego vester ero sive in vita, sive in morte. Et forte miserebitur mei Deus, ut cujus infantiam aluistis, ejus senectutem sepeliatis. Et si alius corpori deputabitur locus, tamen animæ, qualemcumque habitaturæ, erit per vestras sanctas, Deo donante, intercessiones requies.—Op. i. p. 8, ep. v.

[2] His biographer informs us, that if this had been granted, he meant to have become a monk.—Vit. Alc. lxvi.

[3] Cum Felice hæretico magnam contentionem in præsentia domini regis et sanctorum patrum habuimus. . . . divina clementia visitante cor illius, novissime falsa opinione se seductum confessus est.—Op. Alc. i. p. 238.

obtain from Charles, what he had previously solicited in vain,—that he might associate with himself certain of his disciples in the government and holding of his benefices; a measure which assured to them the succession after his death. For the abbey of St. Martin's he chose the deacon Fredegise, for that of Ferrieres the priest Sigulf, and Warembald for the monastery of St. Josse.[1] Being thus restored to himself, he spent the remainder of his days at Tours in exercises of piety, and his usual office of teaching. His diet was spare; his prayer long and frequent; he assisted daily in quality of deacon at a mass sung in his private chapel by one of his disciples; and on Sundays performed the same office at several successive masses from daybreak till the celebration of the high mass in the church. His numerous charities excited the applause and gratitude of the inhabitants of Tours, and an hospital which he founded for the reception of the poor, and of travellers, was long preserved under the tuition of his successors, the abbots of St. Martin's.[2] To prepare himself for death became the great object of his thoughts; and that he might frequently reflect on that hour, he composed his own epitaph, selected a place for his grave without the church, and often visited it, accompanied by his pupils.[3] He did not, however,

[1] Adjutores mihi ex meis propriis filiis elegi, annuente per omnia suggestionibus meis domino meo David (Charlemagne).—(Oper. Alc. i. p. 237.) Nos vero, deposito onere pastoralis curæ, quieti sedemus apud S. Martinum, spectans quando vox veniat, "Aperi pulsanti, sequere jubentem, exaudi judicantem."—Ibid. p. 236.

[2] In the charter of foundation he styles himself Alcuinus, licet indignus, rector atque gubernator monasterii et rerum Si. Martini. —See it in Froben's Commentary, p. 46.

[3] Ibid. pp. 68, 69. Opus meum aliud non est nisi orationibus instare, et præparare mihi habitationes æternas secundum Domini

neglect his favourite occupation; and his school at Tours was equal in reputation to that which he had established in the court. Foreigners, and particularly his countrymen,[1] crowded to his retreat, to enjoy the benefit of his conversation; and the emperor and his family frequently honoured him with their visits.[2]

nostri Jesu Christi misericordiam, qui non deserit sperantes in se.—(Op. i. 247, ep. clxxxiv.) In his letters written towards the end of his life, he never fails to solicit the prayers of his correspondents, that he may be prepared for the hour of death. One example may suffice: Sed hoc maxime supplici deprecor pectore, ut me famulum sanctitatis vestræ in sanctis orationibus commendatum habeas, eo magis quo adpropinquat dies retributionis. Nam me tacito pede curva senectus festinare cogit ad præsentiam Judicis mei, sed et viam itineris, quasi latro rabidus, continua febris obsidet, ut vix aliquod officium in domo Dei explere valeam. Unde me major necessitas compulit ad famulorum Christi currere suffragium.—(Ep. ad Theodulf. Archiep. Op. i. p. 256.) His epitaph may be seen note (L).

[1] The Chronicle of Tours, and most writers, assert that Alcuin introduced canons into St. Martin's. Mabillon thinks he can prove that the monks continued there till his death. However that may be, the clergy of Tours were jealous of the great number of Anglo-Saxons who visited Alcuin. His biographer has preserved the following anecdote on this subject. As Aigulf, an English priest, entered the monastery, four of the French clergy were standing by the gate, and one of them exclaimed in his own language, supposing it unknown to the stranger, "Good God! when will this house be delivered from the crowds of Britons, who swarm to that old fellow like so many bees?" Aigulf held down his head, and entered; but Alcuin immediately sent for them, told them what he had heard, and requested them to sit down, and drink the health of his countryman in a glass of his best wine.—Vit. Alc. p. 67.

[2] When Charlemagne could not visit his old master, he was careful to write to him thus: Carolus Rex Francorum, &c. dilectissimo magistro, nobisque cum amore nominando, Albino abbati.—(Op. Alc. i. p. 88, ep. lxvi.) The following verses do honour, if not to his abilities as a poet, at least to his affection as a friend:—

Mens mea mellifluo, fateor, congaudet amore,
Doctor amate, tui: volui quapropter in odis,
O venerande, tuam musis solare senectam:
Jam meliora tenes sanctæ vestigia vitæ,
Donec ætherii venias ad culmina regni,
Congaudens sanctis, Christo sociatus in ævum.
Meque tuis precibus tecum rape, quæso, magister,
Ad pia, quæ tendis, miserantis culmina regis.

Alc. Epigram. 185.

Thus he lived respected by Charlemagne and his court, and when he died, was lamented, as the pride of his age and the benefactor of the empire.[1]

The pen of Alcuin was seldom idle. For the use of his pupils he wrote, in the form of dialogues, elementary treatises on most of the sciences; compiled, at the solicitation of his friends, the lives of several eminent men; and occasionally proved his devotion to the Muses by the composition of smaller poems. His letters are numerous, and will be read with interest, from the fidelity with which they describe the views, manners, and employments of the most distinguished characters of the age. To him the Caroline books have been attributed, but on conjecture only, and contrary to evidence;[2] his theological works consist chiefly of treatises against the new doctrines of Felix and Elipandus, and in commentaries on several books of Scripture, which, like those by Beda, are in a great measure extracted from the works of the ancient Fathers. As a scholar, Alcuin claims a high superiority over his contemporaries; but his principal merit was derived from the ardour with which he propagated the love of knowledge, from the Gallic Alps to the banks of the Loire, the Rhine, and the Elbe.[3]

[1] Alcuin was seized with paralysis on the night of the 9th of May, 804, and died on the morning of the 19th, being Whitsunday.—(Froben's Comment. p. 50.) He never took priest's orders. Both he and his Anglo-Saxon disciples were canons. This is attested by the language of the monk who wrote his Life from the relation of his favourite disciple Sigulf. "Sequantur vestigia, Benedicti scilicet monachis, Alchuini per omnia canonicis, imitatione digna."—(Oper. Alc. tom. i. p. 60.) "O vere monachum, monachi sine voto."—(Ibid. p. 62.) "Vita denique ejus non monasticæ inferior fuit. Nam qualis in patribus superius nominatis (Ecgberto et Ælberto) præcesserat, talis et in illo durabat."—Ibid. p. 65. [2] See note (G).

[3] Alcuin had taken the name of Flaccus, and had softened his Anglo-

The reader who has been taught to despise the literature of the middle ages will perhaps conceive that I have ascribed to our ancestors more than they justly deserved. But in estimating the respective merits of writers who have lived at different times, it would be unfair to judge all by the same standard. If we compare the literary characters of the seventh and eighth centuries with those of a much later period, the distance between them will, in several respects, appear immense; but their claims to our applause will converge more nearly to a point, when we reflect that the latter have been assisted by the collective wisdom and experience of successive generations; whereas the former were but just emerging from a state of ignorance and barbarism. The obstacles, which the Saxon students had to overcome, were numerous and formidable; and their industry and perseverance demand our admiration. They performed whatever it was possible for men in their circumstances to perform. They collected every relic

Saxon appellation by changing it into Albinus, calling himself sometimes Albinus Flaccus, sometimes Flaccus Albinus. Such changes were common among friends in their correspondence, and in familiar conversation. Thus among the disciples of Alcuin, we find that Charles had taken the name of David; Angilbert, his son-in-law, and mayor of the palace to pepin, king of Italy, that of Homer; Eanbald, archbishop of York, was Simeon; Rigbold, archbishop of Triers, Macarius; Riculf, archbishop of Mentz, Damœtas; Arno, archbishop of Saltzburg, Aquila, &c. Alcuin, writing to Gundrade, a noble lady in the court of Charlemagne, gives to her the name of Eulalia, and begins his letter with this remark: Sæpe familiaritas nominis immutationem solet facere; sicut ipse Dominus Simonem mutavit in Petrum, et filios Zebedei nominavit tonitrui, quod etiam antiquis vel his novellis diebus probare poteris.—(Ep. clxxxiii. p. 247.) It was probably thus that Wynfrith, afterwards the apostle of Germany, acquired the name of Boniface; Hivetbert and Cuthbert, disciples of Beda, the names of Eusebius and Antonius; and two or three of the disciples of the first missionaries in England, those Latin names which are so offensive to Mr. Churton.—See vol. i. p. 68, note 1.

of ancient literature; they undertook the most perilous and laborious journeys in pursuit of knowledge; they studied every species of learning of which they could discover the rudiments in books; and there is reason to believe that they possessed most of the sciences as perfectly as they were known by the learned in any part of the West, when their forefathers made themselves masters of Britain. In purity and elegance of style they were undoubtedly deficient; but taste had been on the decline from the age of Augustus, and had gradually sunk with the prosperity of the empire. The Latin writings of the fourth and fifth centuries show that the language of Rome was no longer the language of Cicero and Virgil; and its deterioration was rapidly accelerated by the conquests of the northern nations, who adulterated it by the admixture of barbarian idioms. This defect then will appear to the candid critic a subject of regret rather than of blame; and when he observes the Saxon writers often equal, and sometimes superior to some who lived before the dismemberment of the empire, instead of despising, he will approve and value their exertions.

CHAPTER XII.

DECLINE OF PIETY AND LEARNING.

DESCENT OF THE DANES—FATE OF LINDISFARNE—LAMENTATIONS OF ALCUIN—DESTRUCTION OF CHURCHES AND MONASTERIES—PREVALENCE OF IGNORANCE AND IMMORALITY—THE NEW DOOM-BOOK OF ALFRED—HIS EFFORTS TO RESTORE THE STUDY OF LETTERS—HIS ASSISTANTS, AND HIS WORKS—MARRIED CLERGY—SECULAR CANONS—EXTINCTION OF THE MONASTIC ORDER.

In the preceding chapters we have observed the introduction and diffusion of Christianity among our ancestors; the faith, discipline, and morals of their monks and clergy; their modes of religious worship, and their ardour in the pursuit of science. From the contemplation of this tranquil scene, the invasions of the Danes summon us to witness the horrors of barbarian warfare, the conflagration of churches, the downfall of the monastic, and the decline of the clerical, order. During the whole of the first, and the greatest part of the second century, after the mission of St. Augustine, the Anglo-Saxon church was conspicuous for the virtues and the knowledge of many among its members. Christianity had given a new direction to the efforts of the converts; and though the contending politics and ambition of their petty sovereigns might occasionally retard, they did not, on the whole, prevent the progress of religious and civil improvement. In the year 800, Egbert ascended the throne of Wessex. His superior fortune or superior abilities soon crushed the power of his rivals; and the friends of religion flattered them-

selves that a long period of tranquillity would atone for the disturbances of former times, and that the church might repose in security under the protection of one powerful monarch. But their hopes were disappointed. A storm was silently gathering in the north, which, after a short respite, burst on the eastern coast, and involved, during more than half a century, the whole island in devastation and ruin. It were, however, inaccurate to suppose that the fervour of the first converts had been perpetuated till this period without suffering any diminution. Nations, like individuals, are subject to vicissitudes of exertion and depression. As long as the impulse communicated by the first missionaries continued, the Anglo-Saxon Christians cheerfully submitted to every sacrifice, and embraced with eagerness the most arduous duties of religion. But after a certain period, the virtues which had so brilliantly illuminated the aurora of their church began to disappear; with the extirpation of idolatry, the vigilance and zeal of the bishops were gradually relaxed; and the spirit of devotion, which had formerly characterized the monks and clergy, insensibly evaporated in the sunshine of ease and prosperity. Even the love of science, which so often survives the sentiments of piety, was extinguished. Malmesbury laments, though he allows of some exceptions, that the knowledge of the Saxons was buried in the same grave with the Venerable Beda;[1] and Alfred informs us that, among the more distant successors of that learned monk, few were able, if they had been willing, to understand the numerous authors that slept

[1] Malm. de Reg. l. i. p. 12.

undisturbed in the tranquillity of their libraries.[1] This degeneracy of his countrymen was remarked and lamented by Alcuin. With every argument that his eloquence could suggest, he attempted to awaken their emulation; and his frequent letters to the kings of Northumbria and Mercia, the archbishops of Canterbury and York, the monks of Hexham, Lindisfarne, and Jarrow, are honourable monuments of his zeal.[2] "Think," he writes to the latter, "on the worth of your predecessors, and blush at your own inferiority. View the treasures of your library, and the magnificence of your monastery, and recall to mind the rigid virtues of those by whom they were formerly possessed. Among you was educated Beda, the most illustrious doctor of modern times. How intense was his application to study! How great in return is his reputation among men! How much greater still his reward with God! Let his example rouse you from your torpor; listen to the instructions of your teachers, open your books, and learn to understand their meaning. Avoid all furtive revellings, and leave to the world the vain ornaments of dress. What becomes you is the modesty of your habit, the sanctity of your life, and the superiority of your virtue."[3] Such were the arguments of Alcuin. That they would have proved successful may reasonably be doubted; but the experiment was prevented by the calamity of the times; and the decline of piety

[1] Sꝑiꝺe lẏꝛle ꝛeopme ꝺapa boca ꝑiꝛꝛon. ꝛopꝺam ꝺe hi hiꝑa nan ꝺuᵹe onᵹiꝛan ne muhꝛon. ꝛopꝺam ꝺe hi næꝑon on hiꝑa aᵹenᵹe ꝺeoꝺe appiꝛene.—Ep. Ælf. ad Wulst. apud Walk. Vit. Alf. p. 196; Wise's Asser, p. 83.

[2] Alc. Op. ep. vi. p. 10; ix. p. 15; x. p. 17; xiii. p. 21.

[3] Ep. Alc. ib. p. 21.

and knowledge, which had originated in the indolence of the natives, was rapidly accelerated by the exterminating sword of the Danes.

During the eighth and ninth centuries, the peninsula of Jutland, the islands of the Baltic, and the shores of the Scandinavian continent, were parcelled among a number of petty and independent chieftains, who knew no other occupation than war, and possessed no other wealth than what they had acquired by the sword. Their children, with the exception of the eldest, were taught to depend for fame and power on their own abilities and courage; their ships were the only inheritance which they derived from their fathers; and in these they were compelled to sail in pursuit of adventures and riches.[1] No injury was necessary to provoke their enmity. The prospect of plunder directed their attack; and carnage and devastation were the certain consequences of their success. They could conceive no greater pleasure than to feast their eyes with the flames of the villages which they had plundered, and their ears with the groans of their captives, expiring under the anguish of torture.[2] The northern seas were originally the theatre of their courage and cruelty. At last they ventured to try their fortune against the more opulent nations of the south; and during more than two centuries, the maritime provinces of Gaul and Britain were continually pillaged and depopulated by these restless barbarians.

It is uncertain whether their first descent in England was the effect of accident or design. They quickly

[1] Wallingford, p. 533; Spelm. Vit. Ælf. edit. Walk. p. 14, note.
[2] Mat. West. p. 388; Ang. Sac. vol. ii. p. 135.

retired to their ships; but the plunder was sufficiently rich to invite a repetition of the attempt.[1] In the year seven hundred and ninety-three, the inhabitants of Northumbria were alarmed by the appearance of a Danish armament near the coast. The barbarians were permitted to land without opposition. The plunder of the churches exceeded their most sanguine expectations; and their route was marked by the mangled carcases of the nuns, the monks, and the priests, whom they had massacred. But historians have scarcely condescended to notice the misfortunes of other churches; their attention has been absorbed by the fate of Lindisfarne. That venerable pile, once honoured with the residence of the apostle of Northumbria, and sanctified by the remains of St. Cuthbert, became the prey of the barbarians. Their impiety polluted the altars, and their rapacity was rewarded with their gold and silver ornaments, the oblations of gratitude and devotion. The monks endeavoured by concealment to elude their cruelty; but the greater number were discovered, and were either slaughtered on the island, or drowned in the sea. If the lives of the children were spared, their fate was probably more severe than that of their teachers: they were carried into captivity.[2]

The news of this calamity filled all the nations of

[1] On hiſ ðaȝum cpomon apeꝛc m ꝛcipu Nopðmanna . . . . . Ðaꝛ ꝛæpon þa æꝛeꝛcan ꝛcipu Denirca monna þe Ängel-cinneꝛ lonð ȝeꝛohꝛoꝛi.—(Chron. Sax. p. 64.) In this passage the appellations of Danes and Northmen are used indiscriminately for the same people. Yet in another passage they are distinguished as two different nations: (æȝðeꝛ ȝe Engliꝛce ȝe Denirce ȝe Nopðmen ȝe oðꝛe.—Chron. Sax. p. 110.)

[2] Sim. Dunel. edit. Bedford, p. 87; Hoved. f. 405; Ep. Alc. cit. Malm. de Pont. l. iii. f. 157.

the Saxons with shame and sorrow. Lindisfarne had long been to them an object of peculiar respect; and the Northumbrians hesitated not to pronounce it the most venerable of the British churches. Alcuin received the account at the court of Charlemagne, and evinced, by his tears, the sincerity of his grief. "The man," he exclaimed, "who can think of this calamity without being struck with terror, who does not in consequence begin to amend his ways, and who does not cry to God in behalf of his country, has a heart not of flesh, but of stone."[1] It reminded him of an extraordinary phenomenon, of which he had been an eye-witness during his last visit to England. "See," he writes to Ethelred, king of Northumbria, "the church of St. Cuthbert is sprinkled with the blood of its priests, and robbed of all its ornaments; that place, the most venerable of all places in Britain, has been given in prey to the gentiles; and where Christianity first took root among us, after the departure of St. Paulinus from York, there hath occurred the first of the calamities which awaited us. What else was portended by that rain of blood which we saw in Lent, at a time when the sky was calm and cloudless, fall from the lofty roof of the northern aisle of the church of St. Peter in York, the capital of the kingdom? Did it not denote that carnage would come upon us, and come from the north?"[2] He wrote to the monks of Lindisfarne, who had escaped from the swords of the Danes, and asked how it came that St. Cuthbert and the saints, whose remains were interred within their church, had not preserved it from

[1] Alc. Oper. i. ep. x. p. 19. [2] Alc. Oper. ep. xii. p. 20.

pollution. Nothing happened by chance. If it was not the first of a long train of evils destined for the whole nation, it must have been meant by God for the punishment of the inhabitants of the island. If then there was anything sinful in their conduct, let them hasten to correct it. Let them remember that *whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth;*[1] it might be that their chastisement had been the more severe, because he loved them the more. Even Jerusalem had been reduced to ashes; Rome had been sacked; all Europe had been convulsed and pillaged by the irruptions of the Huns and Goths. Still God had preserved his church, and given to it to flourish more and more. Let them then say to themselves,—We will return to the Lord, for he is great to pardon, and will not abandon those who place their trust in him.[2]

It was, however, his persuasion that the destruction of Lindisfarne was but the "beginning of sorrow;" that the Danes were destined to act the same part in England which the ancestors of the Anglo-Saxons had formerly performed in Britain. Writing to the monks of Wearmouth and Jarrow, he says,—"Let the fate of others be a warning to you. You also inhabit the sea-coast; you are equally exposed to the fury of the barbarians."[3] The event verified his foresight. Within a few months from the date of the letter, a Danish squadron entered the mouth of the Tyne, and both these monasteries, the noble monuments of Benedict's zeal and Egfrid's munificence, were reduced to ashes. The pirates, however, did not escape with impunity.

[1] Heb. xii. 6.

[2] Alc. Oper. i. ep. viii. p. 12.

[3] Ibid. xiii. p. 22.

Scarcely had they left the harbour, when their ships were dashed by a storm against the rocks. Numbers were buried in the waves; the few who swam to the shore were immolated to the vengeance of the inhabitants.[1]

From this period, during the lapse of seventy years, the Anglo-Saxons were harassed by the incessant depredations of the Northmen. Each bay and navigable river was repeatedly visited by their fleets; the booty acquired by the adventurers stimulated the avarice of their brethren; and armament after armament darkened the shores of Britain. I shall not follow them in these desultory and destructive expeditions, which could only fatigue and disgust the mind of the reader with the unvaried picture of carnage, pillage, and devastation. The wealth of the churches continued to allure their rapacity; each succeeding year was marked by the fall of some celebrated monastery; and the monks, in sorrowful astonishment, bewailed the rapid depopulation of their order.

About the middle of the ninth century, Ragnar Lodbrog, a vikingr renowned for courage and cruelty, who had led his followers to the walls of Paris, and had wrung from the pusillanimity of Charles the Bald the most valuable of his treasures, was shipwrecked on the coast of Northumbria. Undismayed at his misfortune, the intrepid barbarian collected the remains of his troops, and had begun to plunder the nearest villages, when Ælla, the usurper of the Northumbrian sceptre, advanced to chastise his insolence. The pride of Rag-

[1] Chr. Sax. p. 66; Walling. p. 533; Sim. Dun. p. 88.

nar refused to retire before a superior enemy. He fought, was taken, and by his death paid the forfeit of his temerity.[1] The Danes could not reasonably accuse the severity of the conqueror. Had the chance of battle delivered Ælla into the hands of the vikingr, he would have suffered a similar fate. But the sons of Ragnar (they were ten in number) vowed to revenge the death of their father; the pirates of the north crowded to their standard; and the most formidable fleet which had ever sailed from the harbours of Scandinavia steered to the coast of the East-Angles. By the terror of their name and numbers they extorted from the king a reluctant permission to land; and during the winter were supported at the expense of the inhabitants.[2] The return of spring summoned them to the work of vengeance. From the banks of the Ouse the flames of war were spread to the river Tyne; the towns, churches, and monasteries were laid in ashes; and so complete was their destruction, that succeeding generations could with difficulty discover any trace of their former existence.[3] Ælla and his competitor Osbert, forgetting their private quarrel, united in defence of their country. But the latter was slain in the field; the former fell into the hands of his enemies, and the torments which he was made

[1] The adventures of Ragnar are but obscurely hinted in our national writers; the industry of Mr. Turner has collected the particulars from the northern historians.—Hist. vol. ii. p. 115.

[2] Anno 866.

[3] Cruore atque luctu omnia replevit: ecclesias longe lateque et monasteria ferro atque igne delevit, nil præter solos sine tecto parietes abiens reliquit, in tantum ut illa quæ præsens est ætas, ipsorum locorum vix aliquid, interdum nullum, antiquæ nobilitatis possit revisere signum.—Sim. Dunel. Hist. Eccl. Dun. p. 93.

to suffer gratified, but did not satiate, their resentment.[1] Intimidated by the fate of their princes, the inhabitants to the north of the Tyne endeavoured, by a timely submission, to avert the cruelty of the invaders. But Halfdene, their leader, had tasted the fruits of sacrilege; and after an uncertain delay of eight years, he crossed the river with a strong division of the barbarians, and levelled to the ground every church in the kingdom of Bernicia. The abbey of Tynemouth first attracted his rapacity. From its smoking ruins he directed his march towards the island of Lindisfarne. The monastery had risen from its ashes, and was again peopled with a numerous colony of monks. By the approach of Halfdene, they were plunged into the deepest consternation and perplexity. The fate of their predecessors warned them to retire before the arrival of the barbarians; piety forbade them to abandon to insult the body of St. Cuthbert. From this distressing dilemma they were relieved by the decision of the bishop Eardulph, who reminded them of the wish expressed by the saint at his death, that if his children should be obliged to quit the island, his bones might accompany them in their exile.[2] The shrine which contained his body, with the remains of the other bishops of Lindisfarne, was instantly removed from the choir; and a selection was made from the clerks, attendant on the bishop, to bear it to a place of security. With tears the monks bade a last adieu to the walls, in which they had devoted themselves to the monastic profession; the loftiest of the Northumbrian mountains screened

[1] Chron. Sax. p. 79; anno 867.
[2] Bed. Vit. S. Cuth. c. xxxix.

them from the pursuit of the infidels; and the people crowded for protection to the remains of their patron. The abbey was pillaged and given to the flames.[1]

From Lindisfarne the pursuit of plunder led Halfdene to the walls of Coldingham. Of the nuns of this monastery a story has been related, which, though its truth may be problematical,[2] is not repugnant to the stern virtue of the cloister, or the national enthusiasm of the Anglo-Saxons. Æbba, whose maternal authority the sisterhood obeyed, was not ignorant of the character of the chief or his followers. She had learnt that their impiety devoted to instant death the ministers of religion; and that the females were invariably the victims of their lust, and then of their cruelty. Alarmed at their approach, she hastened to the chapter-house, assembled the trembling sisters, and exhorted those who valued their honour to preserve it from pollution by the sacrifice of their beauty. At that instant, drawing a knife from her bosom, she inflicted a ghastly wound on her countenance; and the nuns, with pious barbarity, followed the example of their mother. The gates were soon forced; the Danes turned with horror from the hideous spectacle; and these martyrs to chastity perished in the flames which consumed their monastery.

Seven years were devoted by the barbarians to the acquisition of plunder, nor did they sheathe the sword

[1] Anno 875. Sim. Dunel. p. 95.

[2] The first writer by whom it is known to have been mentioned, is Matthew of Westminster, one of the more recent of our chroniclers. How happened it that so remarkable a fact was passed over in silence by all the writers who preceded him? It is plain that they had never heard of the tale, or that they thought it undeserving of credit.

till nothing remained to allure and gratify their rapacity. During this period, the exiles from Lindisfarne wandered from mountain to mountain, to elude the vigilance of their enemies; but their labours were sanctified in their eyes by the merit of preserving from insult the body of their patron; and they fondly compared themselves to the Israelites, who conveyed through the wilderness to the land of promise the bones of the patriarch Joseph. The lot of the seven individuals who carried the shrine was the object of general envy; their families thought themselves ennobled by the privilege; and their descendants, through many generations, claimed a superiority over the rest of the natives.[1] At the return of tranquillity, the survivors, descending from the mountains, solicited the protection of the conquerors. By the Danes it was willingly granted; the body of the saint was deposited at Conchester,[2] and new honours were paid to his memory.

The ravages of Halfdene inflicted a deadly wound on the monastic institute in the kingdom of Northumbria. Within the short space of seven years, all the abbeys which ancient piety had founded were swept away; and of their inhabitants, the few who had survived the general calamity were unable or unwilling to procure proselytes. With them the order of Northumbrian monks may be said to have expired. A constant succession is, indeed, asserted to have watched at the shrine of St. Cuthbert; but we are also assured that their number never exceeded three individuals at any

[1] Sim. Dunel. p. 113.

[2] Now Chester-le-Street. It was called Conchester from the small river Con.—Lel. Itin. vol. ix. p. 61.

one time, during the long lapse of two hundred and eight years.[1] It was not till the reign of William the Conqueror that the institute was revived by the industry of Aldwin, a monk of Evesham, who collected a small colony from the southern monasteries, and fixed his residence amid the ruins of Jarrow, from which he shortly after migrated to the new church at Durham.[2]

In the annals of northern piracy, all the leaders are equally cruel, and equally versed in the art of devastation. While Northumbria was abandoned to the fury of Halfdene, five Danish kings, with as many jarls, led their retainers across the Humber to the opposite coast of Lincolnshire.[3] The abbey of Bardney was the first to experience their barbarity. It was pillaged, and then consumed over the mangled bodies of its inhabitants. From Bardney they passed the Witham, into the country of the Gervii; but their progress was retarded by the opposition of a determined, though inconsiderable band of patriots. Algar, the ealdorman, had summoned the neighbouring thanes to his standard; Theodore, the abbot of Croyland, sent to his assistance two hundred veterans, under the command of Tolius, then a monk, but formerly an officer of distinction in the armies of Mercia; and the courage of the soldiers was stimulated by the tears of their families, the prayers of the clergy, and their knowledge of the cruelty and rapacity of the enemy. Their first

[1] Sim. Dunel. p. 99.

[2] Plane a tempore quo a paganis ecclesiæ in provincia Northanhymbrorum eversæ et monasteria sunt destructa atque incensa, usque ad tertium annum præsulatus Walchelini, quando per Aldwinum in ipsam provinciam venientem, monachorum in illa cœpit habitatio reviviscere, ducenti et octo computantur anni.—Id. p. 207.

[3] Anno 870.

essay was successful; and the death of three of the kings taught the barbarians to respect the valour of their adversaries. During the night the Danes recalled their detachments, and consoled themselves with the hopes of revenge; a panic struck the Christians, and, under the cover of darkness, three-fourths of the army silently withdrew from the scene of danger.[1] Their retreat did not dismay the few that remained; the intermediate hours were dedicated to the exercises of religion; and each man devoutly received the viaticum from the hands of the priest. At the dawn of light they repaired to their posts, and foiled with the most patient courage the successive assaults of their numerous enemies. At sunset the Danes appeared to retire; with shouts of victory the Christians rushed to the pursuit; and by their imprudence forfeited the reward due to their valour. The flight was only a feint; the fugitives turned against their pursuers; and the small and unconnected bands of the Saxons quickly disappeared beneath the swords of the multitude.

It was midnight when the melancholy tidings reached the abbey of Croyland. Theodore and his monks were employed in the church, chanting matins; but the cries of the messengers summoned them from the duties of religion to the care of their own safety. The younger part of the brotherhood were ordered to secure their charters, relics, and jewels, to cross the lake, and to conceal themselves in a distant wood; while Theodore

[1] In the printed copies of Ingulf, the Christians are said to have dwindled from 800 to 200 (Ing. inter Scrip. post Bed. f. 492); in the Chronicle of Peterborough, from 8,000 to 2,000 (Chron. Abb. de Burg. p. 16, edit. Sparke).

himself, in company with the children and the more aged of the monks, awaited the arrival of the barbarians. The old man was unwilling to abandon his monastery without making an attempt to avert its fate; and he cherished the fallacious hope, that the innocence of the children, and the grey hairs of his brethren (some had passed their hundredth year), would awaken sentiments of pity, even in the breasts of the Danes. While the necessary arrangements were made, the flames from the neighbouring villages gradually approached, and the shouts of the barbarians admonished the fugitives to depart. With heavy hearts the two companies embraced, and separated for ever.[1]

From the beach the junior monks, to the number of thirty, steered across the lake, to the place of concealment: Theodore, with the companions of his fortunes, returned to the choir, resumed the matins, and celebrated mass. Just as he had communicated, the Danes arrived. The solitude and silence of the cloisters would have induced a belief that the inhabitants had fled, had not the distant chant of the monks drawn the barbarians to the church. The gates were forced without difficulty; and Osketul, the Danish chieftain, rushing into the choir, seized the abbot by the hair, and struck off his head at the foot of the altar. The other officiating ministers were despatched by the swords of his followers; but the children and the more aged of the monks were reserved for the torture. It was expected that pain and fear would easily extract a discovery of the concealment of their treasures, and the retreat of their brethren. But the constancy of their minds was

[1] Ing. f. 493.

superior to the weakness of their bodies; and their sufferings were soon terminated by the impatience of the barbarians. One victim alone was spared, a boy of ten years of age, and distinguished by his beauty. His name was Turgar. He had accompanied the sub-prior Lethwin to the refectory; stood by him till he expired under the daggers of his murderers; and solicited the favour of sharing the fate of his tutor. The heart of the younger Sidroc, the Danish jarl, relented; he tore the cowl from the head of the boy, threw a cloak over his shoulders, and bade him to be cautious, and follow his footsteps.[1]

As soon as the barbarians had glutted their appetite for blood, they abandoned themselves to the pursuit of plunder. Every recess was burst open, and every corner was searched with the eye of desire and suspicion. Their avarice violated even the mansions of the dead. Around the shrine of St. Guthlake stood a range of marble monuments, in which were entombed the mortal remains of the saints and benefactors of the abbey. These the infidels defaced and demolished, scattered the bones on the pavement, and raked in the dust for the chalices, rings, and trinkets, which our ancestors were accustomed to bury with the body. Three days were employed in these researches; on the fourth they set fire to different parts of the building, and directed their march towards Medeshamstede.

Medeshamstede, afterwards called Peterborough, was an abbey of royal foundation, and had been enriched by the profuse donations of several princes. It possessed a library to which few others were equal; the

[1] Ing. f. 493.

magnificence of the fabric was the pride of Saxon architecture; and the church, dedicated to the prince of the apostles, was, if we may believe a suspicious charter, exempted from the jurisdiction of the diocesan, and endowed by favour of Pope Agatho with the privileges which distinguished St. Peter's at Rome.[1] Within its walls the inhabitants of the neighbourhood sought protection from the arms of the infidels; and the issue of the first assault seemed to justify their hopes. But in the second, a stone from an unknown hand wounded mortally the brother of Hubba, a Danish king. Eager for revenge, the barbarian redoubled his efforts; and the garrison shrunk in despair from the defence of the principal gate. Resistance ceased with the entrance of the enemy. The fury of the soldiers was satisfied with the slaughter of the crowd of strangers: a long train of more distinguished victims was reserved for the vengeance of the king; and Hubba, with his own hand, immolated the abbot and eighty-three monks, to the shade of his brother. His barbarity was rewarded with spoils more numerous than those of Croyland. The monks had not removed their treasures; and the neighbouring inhabitants had for greater safety deposited their most valuable effects in the monastery. After the division of the plunder, Medeshamstede was burnt. The conflagration lasted fourteen days.[2]

Turgar, the boy of Croyland, had hitherto preserved his life under the protection of Sidroc. But

[1] Chron. Sax. pp. 35, 36; Wilk. p. 44; Hugo Cand. p. 4, edit. Sparke.

[2] Ing. f. 493.

his situation now became more dangerous, and he was admonished by his patron to avoid the eyes of the implacable Hubba. Alarmed at the advice, he embraced a favourable moment to secrete himself from the view of the Danes; and travelling all night through the woods, reached his former residence early in the morning. His arrival was just preceded by that of the younger monks, who had ventured to leave their concealment, and were beginning to extinguish the flames. The sight of Turgar revived their hopes; his faithful narrative realized their fears. The fate of Theodore and their brethren was heard with the deepest anguish: they forgot the object of their labours; and, seated amid the smoking ruins, abandoned themselves to sorrow and despair. From this inactivity they were at length awakened by the necessity of their situation. To supply the place of Theodore, Godric was chosen, a monk distinguished among his brethren for his superior wisdom and piety. By his direction they made it their first care to drag from the ruins the half-burnt bodies of their brethren, and to commit them with decent solemnity to the grave. Scarcely had they completed this pious ceremony, when they were requested by the hermits of Ancarig to perform the same office for the monks of Medeshamstede. With painful research they collected their bodies; dug before the entrance of the church a deep and spacious grave; deposited in the centre the mangled corpse of the abbot, and ranged around him the remains of his eighty-three companions. On the surface, to perpetuate their memory, Godric placed a small pyramid of stone, on which was rudely engraved the history of this bloody

catastrophe; and opposite to the pyramid he raised a cross, on which was engraved the image of Christ. The public road lay between them, and the pious abbot hoped that the presence of the crucifix would prevent travellers from profaning so sacred a spot, and that the figures on the monument would induce them to offer a prayer for those whose ashes reposed beneath it. During the rest of his life these victims of Danish barbarity were seldom absent from his recollection. Yearly, on the anniversary of the massacre, he visited the cemetery, pitched his tent over the grave, and spent two days in celebrating masses, and performing the other devotions to which Catholic charity has attributed the power of benefiting the souls of the departed.[1]

From Medeshamstede, the Danes directed their march to the Isle of Ely, in which was situated a great and opulent monastery, originally founded by Edilthryde, the pious queen of Northumbria. The elevated rank and edifying sanctity of the abbesses by whom it was first governed, had raised it to a high pre-eminence among the southern convents; and its cloisters were still crowded with the most noble and most virtuous of the Saxon ladies. It might have been expected that to these female recluses the fate of Croyland and Medeshamstede would have furnished a useful lesson. Some, indeed, listened to the suggestions of prudence, and shunned by flight the approach of the barbarians; but the greater part refused

[1] . . . omni anno quamdiu vixit semel visitans, supra petram suum tentorium figens pro animabus ibidem sepultorum missas per biduum devotione continua celebravit.—Ing. f. 494.

to abandon their convent; and their determination was confirmed by the afflux of the neighbouring inhabitants, who conveyed their families and effects to Ely, as to a secure asylum. The extensive lake by which the monastery was surrounded, presented a formidable obstacle to the approach of an enemy; and those who were not encouraged by the sanctity, trusted at least to the natural strength of the place. Perhaps, if their efforts had been directed by an intelligent leader, or if their foe had been less determined, they would have had no reason to regret their confidence; and their example might at a later period have stimulated the band of patriots, who in the same place bade defiance, during several years, to all the power of the Norman conqueror.[1] But the Danes, with the prospect of accumulated plunder before their eyes, were not to be retarded by the appearance of difficulties; and in spite of every opposition, they transported their army across the water, and effected a landing on the island. From this instant, submission or resistance was equally fruitless; the massacres of Croyland and Medeshamstede were renewed; the abbey was burnt; and the nuns, after suffering indignities worse than death, ultimately perished by the sword or in the flames.[2]

From these instances we may learn to estimate the sufferings of the monastic and clerical orders during the long period of Danish devastation. Each kingdom in succession became the theatre of their fury. The subjection of East-Anglia was secured by the captivity of its monarch; and his unprovoked murder showed

[1] Ang. Sac. vol. i. p. 609.

[2] Ing. f. 494.

that to the barbarians the blood of kings was as grateful a spectacle as that of monks. Burrhed of Mercia exhibited at first a vigour worthy of his exalted station; but his spirit sunk with repeated defeats; he abandoned the crown which he was unable to retain; and the victors placed it on the head of the traitor Ceolwulf.[1] This shadow of a king was only the sport and victim of their caprice. Within twelve months he was conducted from the throne to the prison, restored to the regal power, and then deprived of the sceptre and life. The Thames alone separated the barbarians from the more opulent provinces on the southern coast: they passed that river, subdued the feeble kingdoms of Kent and Sussex, and compelled the West-Saxons, after an obstinate struggle, to shrink from the contest. Free from apprehension, they abandoned themselves during several months to the licentiousness of victory; and indulged without remorse their passion for bloodshed and plunder. But security relaxed their vigilance; and King Alfred, who had secreted himself among the morasses of Somersetshire, started, at a favourable moment, from his concealment, and surprised his enemies in their camp.[1] This success was the prelude to more important victories; the king improved every advantage; and the invaders were compelled either to retire from the island, or to acknowledge themselves the vassals of the conqueror. Many years, however, elapsed before tranquillity was restored. Hordes of barbarians successively landed on the coast, and solicited by promises and threats the wavering fidelity of their countrymen, who had settled

[1] Anno 878.

in England. But their insolence was severely chastised by Alfred and his successors, and at last all the tribes of the Danes, as well as of the Saxons, submitted to the crown of Wessex.

At the close of this calamitous period the Anglo-Saxon church presented a very melancholy spectacle to the friends of religion. 1. The laity had resumed the ferocious manners of their pagan forefathers. 2. The clergy had grown indolent, dissolute, and illiterate. 3. The monastic order had been apparently annihilated. It devolved on King Alfred, victorious over his enemies, to devise and apply the remedies for these evils; but to enable us to appreciate his efforts and success, it will be previously requisite to review his education and literary acquirements.

Alfred, the fourth son of King Ethelwulf by his consort Osburge, was born at Wantage, in Berkshire, in 849. It is remarked of him, that in his boyhood he was fond of the company of the sceopas or minstrels; that he listened with eagerness to their chants, and recited, to the delight of his parents, such fragments of their songs as he could remember. This boyish taste has been supposed to have given rise to an incident to which more importance has been attributed than it probably deserves. One day his mother, holding in her hand a manuscript of native poetry, and pointing to the initial letter, which was beautifully ornamented, said to her sons, "This I will give to the first among you who shall learn it by heart;" on which Alfred, though the youngest, snatched it from her, ran to his tutor, and by his industry won the prize. The tale, however, comes to us in a very questionable shape; and

the fact, if it ever happened, must have happened at a very early period of Alfred's life; for Osburge died before he had reached his seventh year.[1] He had even passed his twelfth before he was able to read; and after that, his reading was confined to the service for the diurnal hours, a selection of psalms and collects, entered in a small volume, which for the purpose of prayer he carried with him, wherever he might be.[2] This, then, was the sum of his literary attainments when he ascended the throne. He could read his prayer-book without aid; but other books, when he wished it, were read to him by his chaplains; and it was owing to the ingenuity of one of these that he was afterwards led step by step to a much greater proficiency in learning. One day, pleased with a passage which he had just heard, the king drew out his book, and desired Asser, who will be noticed at greater length hereafter, to enter it on the margin of one of the leaves. "There is no room," replied Asser; "but

[1] Asser is made to tell this story as if it had happened after Alfred was twelve years old. But that is impossible, for Alfred was not born before 849, and his father married Judith, his second wife, in 856. To escape from the difficulty, Mr. Turner (ii. p. 9) supposes that by the word mother is to be understood his stepmother Judith; Mr. Wright, that Osburge did not die before Ethelwulf's second marriage, but had been divorced from him, and resumed her maternal charge after his death. But neither supposition can be admitted. Judith was but a mere girl, younger than the eldest of Ethelwulf's sons. Certainly she could not be the mother, intrusted with the care of those princes; and of the divorce of Osburge, there is no proof or probability. On the death of Ethelwulf, her eldest son was king; yet in the story, he is one of the boys dependent on her authority. If the tale is to be believed, it can refer only to the natural mother of the princes, at a time when Alfred was very young.

[2] Usque ad duodecimum ætatis annum et eo amplius illiteratus permansit . . . . . in uno libro congregatos in sinu suo die noctuque, sicut ipsi vidimus inseparabiliter orationis gratia inter omnia præsentis vitæ pericula ubique circumducebat.—Asser, 16, 17.

I will prepare an additional gathering of parchment, and enter it there." This was done; Alfred was delighted with the expedient, and in the course of the day two more extracts were added. In a short time the new gathering was filled with a cento of passages of the king's own selection; and what was of more importance, a desire of intellectual improvement was awakened in the royal mind.[1] He at first required the extracts to be explained to him in English; his next step was to study the Latin grammar; and having mastered that, he proceeded to read, with the aid of his masters, books written in the Latin tongue, and at last ventured to present himself to his subjects in the capacity of author and translator, for their information and improvement.

Having thus followed the king through the course of his literary education, we proceed to notice the manner in which he attempted to reform the whole state of his kingdom.

I. The numerous massacres during the war had considerably thinned the population of the country; and to supply the deficiency, Alfred had adopted an obvious but inadequate expedient in the naturalization of several thousands of Danes. In every kingdom the strangers were intermixed with the natives; in East-Anglia and Northumbria their number and power greatly preponderated. If the sacred rite of baptism had entitled the barbarians to the name and privileges of Christians, their manners and notions still reduced them to a level with their pagan brethren. The superstitious rites of the Scandinavian tribes were in many

[1] Asser, *55, 56.*

places revived. The charms and incantations of magic amused the credulity of the people; the worship of Odin was publicly countenanced, or clandestinely retained; and oaths were exacted and punishments inflicted in vain to extort from these nominal converts an external respect for the institutions of Christianity. In addition, the morals of many among the Anglo-Saxons were scarcely superior to those of the naturalized Danes. During the long and eventful contest, little attention had been paid to the administration of justice; habits of predatory warfare had introduced a spirit of insubordination; and impunity had strengthened the impulse of the passions. The slow and tranquil profits of industry were despised; the roads were infested with robbers; and the numbers and audacity of the banditti compelled the more peaceful inhabitants to associate for the protection of their lives, families, and property. The dictates of natural equity, the laws of the gospel, and the regulations of ecclesiastical discipline were despised. The indissoluble knot of marriage was repeatedly dissevered at the slightest suggestion of passion or disgust; and in defiance of divine and human prohibitions, the nuptial union was frequently polluted and degraded by the unnatural crime of incest.[1] To suppress these licentious habits was the first care of Alfred. With that view he revised the whole code of Anglo-Saxon law, and compiled a new book of dooms, which he submitted to the inspection and consideration

[1] This account of the immorality of the Saxons, after the Danish invasion, is extracted from the letter of Fulco to Alfred, noticed by Flodoard (l. iv. c. 5, p. 612), the epistle of Pope Formosus (Wilk. p. 200), the laws of Alfred and his successors (Wilk. Leg. pp. 28—64), and the Judicia Civitatis Lundoniæ (ibid. p. 66).

of an assembly of the witan. With their approbation it was enacted and published, and sent to the different courts, to be invariably observed. In it the law of Moses, being of divine origin, is taken for the foundation; but to suit existing circumstances, it is modified according to the principles of Christianity, and the immemorial customs of the nation. This new code opens abruptly with the twentieth chapter of the book of Exodus: "The Lord spake these words to Moses, and thus said, I am the Lord thy God; I led thee out of the land of the Egyptians, and of their bondage. Love thou not other strange gods above me." Hence it proceeds through that and the two following chapters, extracting from them forty-eight more passages, but with so many omissions, and substitutions, and amplifications of the original text, that it is difficult to conceive by what particular rule or principle the legislator was guided.[1] We are then told, that Christ our Lord came not to abolish these laws of Moses, but to improve them by tempering justice with mercy; and that therefore Christian legislators have substituted in most cases, for the first offence, a "bot" or pecuniary compensation, in lieu of the capital punishment which ought to be inflicted according to the Jewish law. "I then," he adds, "Alfred, the king, gathered these together, and commanded many of those to be written which our forefathers held; those which to me seemed good: and many of those which to me seemed not good, I rejected, by the counsel of my witan, and in other wise commanded them to be holden; for I durst

[1] See them in Thorpe, i. 44—54. See also note (M).

not venture to set down much of my own; for it was unknown to me what of it might please those who should come after us. But those things which I met with, either in the days of Ine, my kinsman, or of Offa, king of the Mercians, or of Æthelbright, who, first among the English race, received baptism, those which seemed to me the rightest, those I have here gathered together, and rejected the others. I then, Alfred, king of the West-Saxons, showed these to all my witan, and they then said that it seemed to them good that all should be holden."[1]

We now come to the "dooms" themselves. Of these, forty-three concern oaths and sureties, the prosecution of private feuds, and deeds of violence, robbery, and murder, and determine at the same time the "bot" or punishment to which the offender should in every case be liable:[2] then follow thirty-four articles, extracted chiefly from the laws of Ethelbert, enumerating with minute exactness the injuries which may be inflicted on the person, and assigning a separate bot for each injury;[3] and the whole concludes with a code of seventy-six chapters, which had formerly been enacted by King Ine, "with the counsel and teaching of his father Cenred, and his bishops Heddi and Eorconwald, with all his ealdormen, and the most distinguished witan of his people, and a great gathering of the servants of God."[4] It was enjoined that these enactments should be strictly observed in every court in the kingdom; and we are assured that the vigilance with which Alfred watched the proceedings of the judges, and the

[1] Thorpe, i. 58.
[2] Ibid. 60—100.
[3] Ibid. 92—100.
[4] Ibid. 102—150.

severity with which he visited every deviation on their part from the provisions of the dom-boc, whether it sprung from ignorance, inattention, or corruption, infused a new spirit into the administration of justice; the benefits of which were manifest in the diminution of crime, and the gradual return of his subjects to more peaceful and orderly habits. The system which he thus established was retained and improved by his immediate successors; and even survived the rude shock which it afterwards suffered from the invasions of the Danes under Sweyn and Canute, towards the close of the tenth century.

II. In the preceding pages the reader will have noticed the degeneracy of the Anglo-Saxon scholars, after the death of Beda and his disciples. If the learning of their predecessors cast a feeble ray of light on the close of the eighth century, it was extinguished by the devastations of the Northmen, and succeeded by a night of profound ignorance. This lamentable change is amply and feelingly described by Alfred himself. "There was a time," he says in his letter to Wulsige, "when foreigners sought wisdom and learning in this island. Now we are compelled to seek them in foreign lands. Such was the general ignorance among the English, that there were very few on this side the Humber (and I dare say not many on the other) who could understand the service in English, or translate a Latin epistle into their own language. So few were they that I do not recollect a single individual to the south of the Thames who was able to do it when I ascended the throne."[1] To revive among his subjects

[1] Hu man uc on bopbe þiſbom ⁊ lape hiben on lanbe ſohte. ⁊ þe hi

the study of literature appeared to him an object second only in importance to the administration of justice; and, aware of his own imcompetence, from the deficiency of his education, he hoped to supply that want by drawing learned men around him, and employing their services in the dissemination of knowledge. His own dominions could not supply him with teachers; but he made application to the most eminent scholars in foreign countries; and the brightest ornaments of the churches in Wales, Flanders, and Germany were successively allured to his assistance, in consideration of his promises and presents.

In the year 883, an honourable deputation of bishops, and thanes, and priests, and deacons, sailed from England to France, to solicit the aid of teachers from the Gallic prelates. From one of the two monasteries, that bore the name of Corbie, they procured the presbyter John, a native of Old Saxony; and from Fulc, archbishop of Rheims, and abbot of St. Bertins, the provost Grimbald,[1] a priest distinguished for his

nu ꝛceolðan uꝛe beȝiꝛan. ȝiꝛ pe hi habban ꝛceolðan. Spa clæne heo pæꝛ oðꝛeallen on Ängelcynne. Þ ꝛꝛiðe ꝛepa pæpon beheonan Humbꝛe þe hiꝛa þenunge cuðon unbeꝛꝛtandan on Englиꝛc. oððe an æꝛendgeꝛꝛiꝛt oꝛ lædene on Englиꝛc apeccan. ⁊ ic pene Þ nahꝛ moniȝe begeondan Humbꝛe næpon. Spa ꝛeapa heopa pæpon. Þ ic ꝛuꝛðon anne ænlepne ne mæȝ ȝeþencan beꝛuðan Thamiꝛe. þa þa ic to ꝛice ꝛenȝ.—Ælf. Ep. apud Walk. Vit. Ælf. p. 196; Wise's Asser, p. 82.

[1] Asser, pp. 47, 61, and Ep. Fulconis, ibid. 123. But why do I not mention among these eminent scholars John Scotus Erigena—"the most illustrious of Alfred's literary friends, who came from Gaul to Britain at the royal invitation, accepted from the king a professorship at Oxford, and thence removed to the abbey of Malmesbury, where he died"—as we are told by Mr. Soames (Hist. pp. 158, 159)? Because I see no good reason to affirm that Scotus ever came to England, and much less to believe that he was honoured with the friendship of Alfred. A story respecting him is told by several of our chroniclers; by Simeon (De Reg. p. 148), Hoveden (f. 240), Wendover (i. 339), and

knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, and his proficiency in the art of music.[1] A short time afterwards, Asser, a member (probably one of the chorepiscopi) of the church of St. David's, in Wales, was induced, at the

Westminster (p. 171); but it is evident that they all copy from Malmesbury, De Reg. i. 189, 190, and Vit. Aldhel. in Anglia Sacra, ii. 26. Now the only fact which can be considered as certain in the narrative of Malmesbury is, that there existed in his church, on the left of the altar, a monumental slab, bearing the following inscription :—

Clauditur in tumulo sanctus sophista Johannes,
Qui ditatus erat jam vivens dogmate miro ;
Martyrio tandem Christi conscendere regnum
Quo, meruit, regnant sancti per sæcula cuncti.

But who was the tenant of this grave? The word "martyrio" showed that he had suffered a violent death ; and was explained by a vague tradition, that the boys whom the sophist taught, provoked by his severity, had stabbed him with their styles for writing ; a tale to which Malmesbury himself is disposed to give little credit. He conjectures, however, that the sanctus sophista Johannes was Johannes Scotus—for the event is supposed to have happened about the time of Scotus—hoc tempore (that is, 250 years before) creditur fuisse Joannes Scotus (De Reg. i. 189) ; and he understands Alfred to state in his writings that Joannes Scotus was one of his teachers—ejusdem magisterio, ut ex scriptis regis intellexi, sublimis.—(Ang. Sac. ii. 26.) Now there is every reason to think that by scripta regis he means the letter to Wulfsige, of which he gives an abridgment, and from which he extracts this passage : "These things I have learned from Plegmund, my archbishop, and Asser, my bishop, and Grimbald, my mass-priest, and John, my mass-priest." Malmesbury then took this John for Scotus, and it is plain that he was mistaken. 1. Scotus was neither a monk, nor in priest's orders (Mabil. sæc. iv. p. 510) ; this John was both monk and priest—presbyterum et monachum (Asser, p. 47), and was also abbot of the monks of Æthelingey.—(Id. 71.) Johannes Scotus was by birth an Irishman,—genere Scotus (Ep. Nic. Pap. ad Carol. Imp.)—Scotigena vir (Anast. Ep. ad eund. in Sylloge Epist. ep. 24) ; but John the teacher of Alfred was a native of Old Saxony—Eald-Saxonum genere.—(Asser, p. 61.) Hence it appears to me that Malmesbury, in getting up this story, has confounded the two Johns, and taken one for the other. It is unnecessary to notice the opposite passage from Ingulf—De veteri Saxonia Joannem, cognomine Scotum, acerrimi ingenii philosophum (fol. 495) ; because it is copied verbatim from Asser, with the exception of the words cognomine Scotum, which are an interpolation, and flatly contradict the other part of the sentence —de veteri Saxonia.

[1] Asser, p. 46.

solicitation of Alfred, to visit him at Dene, in Sussex. The object of the king was to prevail upon him to fix his habitation in England. Asser's vanity was flattered; he consulted his brethren at St. David's; and it was finally arranged that he should divide the year between the English court and his own church. He came, prolonged his visit to eight months, and at his departure received from Alfred a grant of two ancient monasteries, with all their lands and appurtenances; to which was afterwards added another and more valuable gift,—the church at Exeter, with all the episcopal possessions belonging to it in Saxony and Cornwall.[1] With these learned foreigners, the king joined four Anglo-Saxons, the priests Werewulf and Ethelstan, and the bishops Plegmund of Canterbury, and Werfrith of Worcester.[2] They formed a body of preceptors in his court; the English thanes were exhorted to profit by their instructions, and Alfred himself set the example, by commencing under them, as the reader is already aware, the study of the Latin language.

The king's proficiency in this new branch of knowledge was but indifferent; yet it suggested to him another expedient for the diffusion of literature among the freeborn Saxons. "When I think," he says, in his letter to Wulfsige, "on the number of learned men who once flourished in England, and the number of learned books which they possessed, I am inclined to wonder how it happened that they never thought of translating their books into their native tongue. But then I answer myself, that it could not occur to them

[1] Asser, pp. 47, 51. Note (N). [2] Id. p. 46.

that there would ever be such a dearth of learning as to make it necessary. But now methinketh it better, if you think so likewise, that we should translate some of the books, the most needful for men to read, into that language which we all can understand."[1] It was with this view that he became an author and translator. The book to which he prefixed the passage quoted above was the Pastoral of St. Gregory, which, he informs us, was done by him into English, sometimes word for word, and sometimes sense for sense, as he had learned it from Plegmund his archbishop, and Asser his bishop, and Grimbald his mass-priest, and John his mass-priest;[2] and so highly did he value the performance, that he sent a copy of it to every cathedral in his dominions, with an æstel of the price of fifty mancuses, and a solemn prohibition, in the name of God, ever to permit the removal of the æstel from the book, or of the book from the minster, except it were that the bishop sought to read it in private, or it should be lent to others for the purpose of transcription.[3]

[1] Letter to Wulfsige in preface to Pastoral, Wise, p. 84.

[2] Ibid. p. 85.

[3] Ibid. p. 86. Three of the copies sent out by the king are still in existence—those to the bishops of Canterbury, Sherborne, and Worcester,—in the British Museum, Cotton MS. Tib. B. xi.; the Public Library, Cambridge; and the Bodleian Library, MS. Hatton No. 88. —Mr. Wright, Biog. Lit. p. 394.

The king did nothing unusual when he sent these books to the several churches. The object of such presents was that the books might be accessible to the persons who frequented those churches. Ceolfrith, abbot of Wearmouth, ordered three copies of the entire Bible to be written. One he reserved as a present for the Pope, the other two he placed in two churches, that all who wished to read any particular passage might have the opportunity—totidem per duo sua monasteria posuit in ecclesiis, ut cunctis, qui aliquod capitulum de utrolibet Testamento legere voluissent, in promptu esset invenire quod cuperent.—Vit. Ceolf. in App. Bed. Oper. Min. p. 325.

But what was the æstel of fifty mancuses, which accompanied each

We have, moreover, from the pen of Alfred a version of the history of Orosius, a work held in the highest estimation at that period ;[1] and another of the treatise by Boethius, entitled "De Consolatione Philosophiæ," of which the more difficult passages were previously put into easier language by Asser, for the convenience of the royal translator.[2] But his favourite work in the eyes of his countrymen was the version of Beda's Ecclesiastical History. Of his rightful claim to this version some doubt has existed ; but that doubt cannot reasonably be entertained, when we have the express assertion of the celebrated Ælfric that "Alfred, the king, translated it out of Latin into English."[3]

We may believe this patriotic monarch when he asserts that he was induced to apply to pursuits so contrary to his habits, by the sole motive of contributing

copy? Æstel is a word which has sorely tormented philologists. It seems to be derived from ɣtal, *a stall*, and, if I may hazard a conjecture, may signify a book-case or book-stand. St. Wilfrid gave a book of the gospels to the church of Ripon in a case of gold.—Edd. Vit. Wilf. c. 17. See note (O).

[1] It was edited by Daines Barrington, Esq., in 1773.

[2] Malm. de Reg. i. 189. It was published with a translation by Mr. Cardale, in 1829.

[3] Elstob, Hom. on St. Gregory, p. 2. It is to be found in the editions of Beda's Latin History by Wheloc in 1643, and Smith in 1722. There is also a work of very ancient date, consisting of moral lessons supposed to have been delivered by Alfred in a great meeting of his thanes and bishops at Sifforde, and known by the name of his proverbs. Sir John Spelman published an abstract of them from an old English translation in his Life of Alfred, l. ii. No. 46, and they have lately been published in Anglo-Saxon by Mr. Wright, in Reliq. Antiq. i. 170—188. The language shows that this tract was put into its present form after the Conquest ; whether its author had any authority for attributing the substance to Alfred, we know not. It appears from Malmesbury (De Reg. i. 191), that Alfred's manual or "handbook" was still in existence, and was a collection of miscellaneous matter on all sorts of subjects.—See Malm. on St. Aldhelm, and de Pont. l. v. 341, 342.

to the intellectual improvement of his countrymen. He was, however, aware that books alone could be of little service, as long as men remained in ignorance of the use of letters; and, to remedy this evil, bethought himself of establishing a general school, in which the children of his thanes might be taught the rudiments of learning, and from them be gradually conducted to higher pursuits. "We ought," he says, "to provide, as we easily may with the aid of God, if we enjoy tranquillity, that all the young sons of free men, who have the means of maintaining themselves, should be set to learning while they have no other employment, till in the first place they can read English writings; and then let men teach them the Latin tongue, if they will, and mean to raise them to a higher degree."[1] This new project was soon carried into execution. Hitherto his children had been educated at home, where they were daily instructed in psalmody, the recitation of native poetry, and the reading of books in the vernacular language. But as soon as his school was established, he placed there his youngest son Æthelweard, and called upon his thanes to follow his example. Most of them obeyed; and to this crowd of noble youths he added a number of children from the lower classes. All were instructed in the arts of reading and writing, and many in the Latin grammar, before they were of age to be called home by their parents.[2] This is all that we read of Alfred's school. He considered it as the seed-plot, from which knowledge should spread itself over the kingdom; but it does not appear

[1] Preface to Pastoral, Wise, p. 85.

[2] Asser, pp. 42, 43.

to have survived him: his immediate successors devoted their attention to the subjugation of their enemies, and the consolidation of their own power; and the cause of education was suffered to languish, till it received a new impulse under Edgar, from the zeal and industry of Archbishop Dunstan and his disciples.

III. 1.—It is probably to the same calamitous period that we must refer the origin of a very important innovation in ecclesiastical discipline. The reader is aware that the clergy were divided into two classes, one of inferior clerks in minor orders, and employed as lectors, cantors, acolythists, exorcists, and doorkeepers; and the other of clerks in holy orders, deacons, and mass-thanes, whose office it was to minister at the altar, and to offer the sacrifice. To the first of these, marriage was always allowed; the latter were bound to a life of the strictest continence.[1] This was the doctrine and practice of the Anglo-Saxon church from its origin: for three hundred years after the arrival of St. Augustine there is no mention of a married priest in any ancient document. It may, however, have been that towards the end of Alfred's reign this obligation was called in question, as seems to be hinted in a letter of Fulco, archbishop of Rheims:[2] and it is certain that, under his successors, in the tenth century, we meet with priests who were married, and cohabited with their wives. Nor is it difficult to discover the cause of

[1] See vol. i. c. iv. p. 158.

[2] A report had reached him (no very satisfactory authority) that a sect in England taught it to be lawful for bishops and priests subintroductas habere mulieres.—(Flodoard, Hist. Rhem. lib. iv. c. 5.) This report might perhaps originate in some dispute respecting the wives of married clergymen, who had been promoted to the priesthood.

this anomaly. During the repeated invasions of the Danes, numbers of the clergy had perished by the swords of the pagans, and most of the episcopal seminaries, from which the bishops selected clerks for ordination, had been destroyed. The consequence was, that, to supply mass-thanes for country and district churches, they would have recourse to the clerks of the inferior orders, who were many of them already married. Thus it was in the north, where the bishop of Durham raised to the priesthood the married clerks who had been the bearers and guardians of St. Cuthbert's body;[1] and thus probably it may have been in other parts, where the same necessity existed. Nor was there any irregularity in it; for the canons only required that the parties should previously agree to separate, and make a solemn promise of continency.[2] It is very possible that, under the pressure of circumstances, this preliminary engagement may not have been exacted: if it were, it most certainly was disregarded: example and impunity gradually propagated the scandal; and at length the married priests became sufficiently

[1] Simeon, pp. 107, 113, 143. The same reason is assigned by St. Epiphanius for the occasional ordination of married priests in the first ages of Christianity.—Τοῦτο οὐ παρὰ τὸν κανόνα, ἀλλὰ παρὰ τὴν τῶν ἀνθρώπων κατὰ καιρὸν ῥαθυμήσασαν διάνοιαν, καὶ τοῦ πλήθους ἕνεκεν, μὴ εὑρισκομένης ὑπερησίας.—Hær. 59, p. 496.

[2] Pope Zachary, in his letter to St. Boniface on this subject, says with respect to married clerks,—hoc ante susceptum sacerdotium uti licitum est. Nam a die suscepti sacerdotii etiam ab ipso proprio conjugio prohibendi sunt.—(Inter Epist. S. Bonif. Ep. cxlii. p. 217.) If, after ordination, the priest or deacon returned to his wife, he was liable, by the most ancient penitentiaries, to the same penance as for homicide.—(See Thorpe's Institutes, ii. pp. 14, 206, 272.) Ðif mæſſe-ppeoſt oþþe munuc oþþe diacon piſ piſ hæfde, æfi he ȝehadod pæpe, ⁊ hi foplete, ⁊ to hade fenȝe ⁊ ſiþþan þuph hæmeð-þinȝe hi eft undeſſenȝe, ſæfte heofa ælc ſfa be manſlihte, ⁊ hfeoffian ſfiðe.

numerous to bid defiance to the laws both of the church and the state.[1]

There are still extant several episcopal charges delivered by different bishops during the last hundred years of the Anglo-Saxon church. In all of them this forms a prominent subject. The clergy are constantly reminded that their ordination has imposed on them the obligation of a life of continence, an obligation from which no power on earth can unbind them; that "his church is the priest's wife;" that he cannot have any other; that intercourse with his wife according to the world, becomes after ordination the sin of adultery;[2] that it is not lawful for any woman to dwell in the house with a mass-priest, though the canons allow mother and sister, and those persons of whom no evil report can be expected. "We, however," says one of the prelates, "forbid every woman; because if these relatives be there, they may perhaps have female attendants, who may instigate the mass-priest to sin."[3]

Still it is plain that the bishops confined themselves

[1] Married priests were, strictly speaking, those who had been married before ordination. After ordination, they were more loosely said to marry—pyrran, to take wives—when the parties lived together by mutual agreement only, for there existed no legal form by which they could be married.

[2] "Those are adulterers who through holy orders have entered into an ecclesiastical marriage, and afterwards have broken it. To no minister of the altar is it allowed to take a wife, but it is forbidden to every one: yet there are now altogether too many who commit and have committed adultery; but I pray, and for the love of God command, that this may cease. . . Men in orders are some so deceived by the devil that they take wives unrighteously, and foredo themselves by the adultery in which they continue. I earnestly pray that this deadly sin may henceforth be carefully abstained from. The church is the priest's wife, he may not rightfully have any other."—Thorpe, ii. 334. Also pp. 374, 383.

[3] Ibid. p. 345.

to entreaties and expostulations, to general censures, and the denunciation of punishment in the world to come. They deemed it imprudent, in the existing circumstances, to proceed to particular instances of severity, and to provoke a still greater evil by depriving the offenders of the power of exercising their ministry in the rural churches. Ælfric thus concludes one of the charges: "Beloved, we cannot now compel you to observe chastity of necessity; but we admonish you to observe it as Christ's ministers ought to do, and as those holy men did whom we before mentioned, who lived all their lives in chastity."[1] And again, "We dare not silently refrain from reciting to you the holy ordinances which ye ought to observe; we shall be guiltless by reciting them to you. Know ye, whether ye will secure your own souls, and correct yourselves."[2]

It should be added, that in this matter the legislature readily lent its aid to the admonitions of the bishop, though the frequent iteration of such enactments shows that they were sparingly enforced, and often transgressed with impunity. In the dooms of Edmund, and Edgar, and Ethelred, and Canute, spreading over more than a century, we find the canons of the church repeatedly enacted as civil laws by the king and the witan. The transgressors are pronounced "deserving of that which is ordained in the canon, which is, that they forfeit their worldly goods, and Christian sepulture, unless they do penance."[3] In subsequent laws, after an exhortation to priests "to

[1] Thorpe, ii. p. 376. [2] Ibid. p. 382.
[3] Edmund's Dooms, Thorpe, i. 244.

love chastity, and to secure themselves against the wrath of God, because they know full well that they cannot lawfully have any concubinage with women," it is enacted, "Let him, then, who will abstain from this, and preserve his chastity, have God's mercy, and in addition thereto be worthy of thane-wer and thane-right, both in life and in the grave; and he who will not do that which is befitting his order, let his worth wane before God, and before the world."[1]

Of the reasoning employed by the champions of the opposite parties we may form some notion from the writings of Ælfric. In favour of the married clergy it was strongly urged that Christ had chosen Peter, a married man, for the leader of the apostles; and that the Christian clergy had succeeded not only to the place, but also to the privileges, of the Jewish priests, to whom it was not merely allowed, but even enjoined, to marry. To this Ælfric replied, that when Peter took a wife, he was living under the law of Moses; but that, after he had been called by Christ, he left wife and all things else to follow his Master; and there was also a considerable difference between the Christian and the Jewish priesthood; because the latter was confined to the descendants of certain families, and therefore could be perpetuated only by marriage; yet even then the priest was allowed to marry but once, and to no other than a pure maiden. "Besides," he added, "they might well have wives in those days, because they never had

[1] Ethelred's Dooms, Thorpe, i. 306, 316. Cnut's Dooms, Thorpe, i. 364. The reader will observe that in the enacting part of this law "the *worth* of the priest, his thane-wer, and thane-right in life and in the grave," means the same as his "worldly goods, and Christian sepulture" in the preceding law of King Edmund.

to clebrate mass, nor to administer the housel to men, but offered beasts after the old wise, until Christ hallowed the housel before his passion, and established the mass, which now stands through him."[1] The argument drawn from the hardship of a life of continence he repelled with contempt. Such manner of life had been faithfully observed by the saints in other countries; it had been faithfully observed by the saints in this country; let the men who had succeeded to them in office equal them in virtue, and they would equally revere and practise that purity of life which was commanded by the canons of the church.[2]

2. A second and almost incurable wound had been inflicted on the discipline of the age, by the dissolution of the clerical monasteries, and the conversion of the conventual and collegiate clergy into secular canons. In many of these establishments the inmates had been regular canons from the beginning; in many they had originally been monks, and had converted themselves, as we have already seen,[3] into regular canons; but all considered themselves bound by their "rule" to reside within the precincts of their monasteries, to meet daily in the church for the performance of divine service, to take their meals in the same common hall, and to sleep in the same dormitory,—a long gallery divided by partitions of wood into separate cells. It is plain that this manner of life was incompatible with the state of marriage; and accordingly we find that regular canons, whether in holy orders or not, are always reckoned among those who are bound to a life of chastity. But by

[1] Ælf. ibid., and Thorpe ii. 344, 366.
[2] Ælf. ibid.
[3] See vol. i. p. 215.

the invasion of the Danes most of these confraternities had been dispersed; and their members, in the families of their friends and relatives, acquired a love of pleasure, a spirit of independence, and a contempt of regular discipline. Of the younger clerks some adopted the married state; others plunged with precipitation into the pleasures and vices of the age, and by their licentiousness shocked the piety of their more fervent brethren. The restoration of tranquillity invited the survivors to return to their monasteries; but the yoke which their virtue had formerly rendered light now pressed on the shoulders of many as an intolerable burden. In several instances they ventured to emancipate themselves from the restraints of the ancient discipline, divided among themselves the revenues of their churches, lived in separate families, and confined themselves solely to the obligation of assisting daily in the choir during the public worship. Even this obligation was soon despised; they accepted the vicarious services of others, retired to the farms attached to their respective prebends, and sometimes absented themselves from attendance in their churches for several years together. To indulge in ease and indolence seemed to be their principal object; and the care of serving God was abandoned to the industry of mercenary substitutes.[1]

3. While the reputation of the clergy was thus obscured by their ignorance and degeneracy, the monastic profession had sunk into insignificance and

[1] See the Saxon Chronicle (p. 117), Osbern (Vit. Duns. p. 112), Eadmer (Vit. Duns. p. 219), and Annales Ecclesiæ Wintoniensis (p. 289).

contempt. There was scarcely a monastery which had escaped the visits of the invaders; and the devastation which had been begun by the rapacity of the Danes was completed by the policy of the Saxon princes. To replenish their treasuries, exhausted by the continuance of the war, the monastic possessions presented an easy and obvious expedient: they were pronounced the property of the crown; and while a considerable portion was annexed to the royal domains, the remainder was divided among the retainers of the prince.[1] Of the monks who had survived the ruin of their convents, many engaged in secular professions, some retired to the churches which were still served by the clergy, and a few endeavoured to re-establish and perpetuate the institute.[2] But their efforts were ineffectual; and poverty, or the difficulty of procuring proselytes, compelled them to relinquish the fruitless project.[3] The days were past when kings exchanged the crown for the cowl. That ferocity of manners which constant habits of warfare had inspired equally despised the milder pleasures of society and the duties of religion; no profession could command respect but that of arms; and the monastic

[1] Archbishop Parker gravely informs his readers, that the destruction of the monasteries was ordained by Providence, as a punishment for the diabolic superstition of the monks; and that the prosperity enjoyed by Alfred and his immediate successors, was granted by Heaven as a reward for the pious marriages of the clergy.—Hæc licuit in medium proferre, ut occultum Dei judicium in obruendis monachorum cultibus superstitiosis et diabolicis . . . . probe animadvertamus. Monachorum loco succedebant presbyteri, qui in conjugio legitimo pie vivebant. Tunc vero Deus Opt. Max. præbuit se magis mitem atque placabilem erga Anglicanam gentem!—Ant. Brit. fol. 72, 73.

[2] Ingulf, f. 494—496.

[3] The monks of Croyland amounted to thirty, after the retreat of the Danes. Instead of adding to their number, they gradually dwindled away, by desertion and death, till the reign of Edred, when the whole community consisted of the abbot and two monks.—Id. f. 496.

institute was looked upon with scorn, as calculated only for mercenaries and slaves.[1] When Alfred reascended the throne, he endeavoured to raise the order from the obscurity in which it languished, and selected for the attempt the memorable spot which had concealed him from the pursuit of the Danes. But it was easier to found the monastery of Ethelingey than to people it with inhabitants. Among his subjects no one would condescend to put on the monastic habit.[2] He was compelled to collect a colony of monks from monasteries in Gaul, and to these strangers he added a competent number of foreign children, who by their education might acquire a predilection for the institute, and by their future vows might insure its existence.[3] Whether the success of the king was answerable to his zeal, we are not informed; but circumstances have transpired to justify a suspicion, that some of the foreigners soon resigned, perhaps never possessed, the true spirit of their profession. Their superior was John of Old Saxony, already noticed as a priest of distinguished talents, and one of the royal instructors. His prudent severity incurred the hatred of the more

[1] Nullum de sua propria gente nobilem ac liberum hominem, qui monasticam voluntarie vellet subire vitam, habebat. Nimirum quia per multa retroacta annorum curricula monasticæ vitæ desiderium ab ea tota gente, necnon a multis aliis gentibus, funditus desierat: quamvis perplurima adhuc monasteria in illa regione constructa permaneant, nullo tamen regulam illius vitæ ordinabiliter tenente (nescio quare), aut pro alieniginarum infestationibus, quæ sæpissime terra marique hostiliter irrumpunt, aut etiam pro nimia illius gentis in omni genere divitiarum abundantia, propter quam multo magis id genus despectæ monasticæ vitæ fieri existimo.—Asser, p. 61.

[2] Asser, ibid.

[3] Comparavit etiam quamplurimos ejusdem gentis Gallicæ, e quibus quosdam infantes in eodem monasterio edoceri imperavit, et subsequenti tempore ad monachicum habitum sublevari.—Id. ibid.

worthless among his subjects: two of the number formed the design of murdering their abbot; and some of their countrymen who were servants in the monastery engaged to be the ministers of their vengeance. At the hour of midnight, the old man arose in silence according to his custom, entered the choir by a private door, and threw himself on his knees before the altar. This was the opportunity which the assassins expected. While his attention was absorbed in prayer, they darted on their unsuspecting victim, and plunged their daggers in his body. His cries alarmed the monks; they crowded to the church, and discovered the abbot weltering in blood. The murderers had escaped to the neighbouring woods. They were pursued, and, together with their employers, received the punishment due to their crime.[1]

By the death of Alfred the monastic order lost a powerful and zealous protector. During the reigns of his immediate successors, some feeble attempts were made to restore it to its former celebrity; and the origin of several monasteries is referred by their respective historians to this doubtful period. But their existence is denied by the positive testimony of King Edgar; and unless we accuse that prince of sacrificing the truth to his vanity, we must believe that under the reigns of his predecessors every monastic establishment was abolished.[2] The Anglo-Saxons, who

[1] Asser, p. 61. Was not this the origin of the story told by Malmesbury of the John buried in his church having been murdered by the boys whom he taught?

[2] Temporibus antecessorum meorum, regum Anglorum, monasteria tam monachorum quam virginum destructa (et) penitus rejecta in tota Anglia erant.—(Wilk. p. 239.) Asser informs us, that in his days no

before the time of St. Dunstan aspired to the merit of monachism, either contented themselves with receiving the habit from the hands of a bishop, and leading an anachoretical life amid the ruins of some deserted abbey, or quitted their native country, and in the most celebrated of the foreign monasteries laboured to imbibe the spirit, and practise the duties, of their profession. Fleury was their principal resort; and when the order was afterwards revived in England, from that monastery were imported most of the regulations and the teachers of monastic discipline.[1]

The communities of religious women had not suffered less than those of the men from the ravages of the barbarians; but they were restored with greater success under the patronage of Alfred and his queen, Alswithe. The nunnery at Shaftesbury was founded by the prince, that of St. Mary at Winchester, by his royal consort. To people these houses, it was not necessary to solicit the assistance of foreigners. The Saxon ladies viewed

one observed the monastic rule (nullo tamen regulam illius vitæ ordinabiliter tenente—Asser, p. 62); and Wolstan, the contemporary author of the Life of St. Ethelwold, observes, that when that prelate was made bishop of Winchester, the only monks in England were those whom St. Dunstan had established at Abingdon and Glastonbury. Nam hactenus ea tempestate non habebantur monachi in gente Anglorum, nisi tantum qui in Glestonia morabantur et Abbandonia.—Wolst. in Act. Bened. sæc. v. p. 615.

[1] Hist. Abend. p. 165. The saints, Dunstan, Oswald, &c., were educated at Fleury, familiari per id tempus Anglis consuetudine, ut si qui boni afflati essent desiderio, in beatissimi Benedicti monasterio cœnobialem susciperent habitum, a *quo* religionis hujuscemodi manavit exordium.—(Malm. de Pont. l. iii. f. 153.) Does the relative *quo* refer to St. Benedict or the monastery? The claims of each antecedent have been fiercely maintained. Those who admit the antiquity of the Benedictine institute, have decided in favour of the saint; its adversaries are equally positive for the monastery.—Broughton, p. 420.

Non nostrum est tantas componere lites.

the retirement of the cloister with less prejudice than the men; and the birth, as well as the virtues, of the first abbesses cast an inviting lustre on the profession. As soon as Alfred had completed the convent at Shaftesbury, his daughter Ethelgeove assumed the government of the infant establishment; and several females of the first distinction hastened to profess themselves her disciples.[1] Alswithe envied the tranquil situation of her daughter: at the death of Alfred she retired to the abbey of St. Mary; and her declining years were solaced by the company and the rising virtues of her granddaughter Eadburge. The history of Eadburge is curious. It was the early wish of her father, King Edward, to devote her to the cloister; but to consign to perpetual confinement an infant, who was yet unable to choose for herself, was an idea that shook his resolution.[2] He hesitated, and, after some deliberation, committed the decision of his scruples to a singular and most uncertain

[1] In quo monasterio propriam filiam Æthelgeovam devotam Deo virginem Abbatissam constituit: cum qua etiam aliæ multæ nobiles moniales in monastica vita Deo servientes in eodem monasterio habitant.—(Asser, p. 64.) According to the king's charter, which is in Anglo-Saxon, he gave with his daughter Agelive, "who was in broken health, a hundred hides, with the meat and the men belonging to them, and the rights which he had over them."—Cod. Dipl. ii. 106.

[2] The custom of offering children to be devoted for life to the monastic or clerical profession, was early adopted in the Christian church, in imitation of the oblation of the prophet Samuel, in the temple of Jerusalem. The idea that the determination of his parents was no less binding on the child, than the voluntary profession of adults, was first embraced in the sixth century (Bing. vol. i. p. 255), and followed till the pontificate of Celestin III., who, according to the more ancient discipline, permitted the child at a certain age to decide for himself.—(See Mabillon, Vet. Anal. p. 157; Excerp. Egb. apud Wilk. p. 107; Nat. Alex. tom. vi. pp. 102, 143, 594.) Numerous examples of this practice occur in our ancient writers.—(See Bede, l. iii. c. 24; Alc. de Pont. Ebor. v. 1416; Hist. Ram. pp. 495, 497, 499.) The ceremony of the oblation may be seen in St. Benedict's Rule (c. 59), and in Lanfranc's Constitutions (Wilk. p. 355).

experiment. Eadburge (she was but three years old) was conducted into a chamber, in one corner of which had previously been placed a collection of female trinkets, in another a chalice with the book of the Gospels. It so chanced that the child ran to the latter; and her father, clasping her in his arms, exclaimed, "Thou shalt receive the object of thy choice; nor will thy parents regret, if they yield to thee in virtue." She was intrusted to the care of the nuns at Winchester, with whom she spent a long course of years, eminent among the sisters for her tender piety and extraordinary self-abasement.[1]

In the succeeding reigns the number of convents continually increased. The deportment of the nuns was regular and edifying; but the quality of the abbesses, and the wealth of their convents, induced them to assume a pomp which ill accorded with the ideas of those who admired the poverty of the ancient monks. When Ethelwold, bishop of Winchester, was labouring to revive the original discipline of the Benedictine institute, he saw at court the abbess Edith, daughter of King Edgar. Her dress was splendid, and shocked the austere notions of the prelate. "Daughter," he observed to her, "the spouse whom you have chosen delights not in external pomp. It is the heart which he demands." "True, father," replied the abbess, "and my heart I have given to him. While he possesses it, he will not be offended with external pomp."[2] Edith might be permitted to make the reply. Within the

[1] Malm. de Reg. l. ii. c. xiii. f. 50; de Pont. l. ii. f. 140.

[2] Malm. de Reg. l. ii. c. xiii. f. 50. Gotselin, Vit. St. Eadgithæ, apud SS. Bened. sæc. v. p. 637.

walls of her convent she was distinguished by the austerity of her life; and her profuse donations to the indigent demonstrated the solidity of her virtue. After her death the Saxon church enrolled her name in the catalogue of the saints. Nor has her reputation been confined within the limits of her own country; she is commemorated with peculiar praise in the Roman martyrology.

CHAPTER XIII.

REFORM BY ST. DUNSTAN.

BIRTH AND EDUCATION OF ST. DUNSTAN—HE IS MADE ABBOT OF GLASTONBURY—IS BANISHED BY EDWY—RECALLED BY EDGAR—IS MADE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY — RESTORES THE MONASTIC ORDER—IS AIDED BY OSWALD AND ETHELWOLD—EJECTS THE INCONTINENT CLERGY—THE DISASTER AT CALNE—HIS LAST SICKNESS AND DEATH—HIS LETTER TO BISHOP WULFSINE—HIS ATTENTION TO THE RESTORATION OF LEARNING—BRIDFERTH—ÆLFRIC—WORKS OF ÆLFRIC—NEW INVASIONS OF DANES—STATE OF THE CHURCH TILL THE CONQUEST.

We are now come to the tenth century, the darkest period in the history of the Christian church; yet during that period in England, as well as in other kingdoms, there were not wanting men of acknowledged virtue, who made it the great object of their lives to enlighten the ignorance, and to reform the morals, of their countrymen. Among these a distinguished place was allotted by the consent of ages to the celebrated St. Dunstan; but, since the Reformation, it has been a favourite occupation with many writers to tear from his grave the laurels planted upon it by the gratitude of his contemporaries.[1] There is, however, something very suspicious in that sagacity which, at the distance of several hundred years, pretends to see more deeply and more clearly into the character of a man than was seen by those who lived at the same time, and who profited by his services; and that sagacity becomes

[1] See among the more modern of these, Rapin, Carte, Hume, Henry, Turner, Southey.

still more suspicious, when the only proof which we have of its existence, is a determination to attribute to selfish or odious motives, actions of themselves the most harmless, often the most praiseworthy. Dunstan will of necessity occupy a considerable space in this chapter; I shall therefore proceed at once to his history, contenting myself with the narrative of facts, as they appear in the pages of his most ancient biographers, and neglecting equally the traditionary tales of supernatural agency, with which his admirers have bedizened his character, and the suppositious features of hypocrisy and ambition, with which his enemies have disfigured it.[1]

His family was noble, and claimed a remote alliance with the kings of Wessex. From the Irish clergymen, who served the church of Glastonbury, he received the first rudiments of learning; and at that early period displayed those abilities which afterwards raised him to so high a pre-eminence above his contemporaries.[2]

[1] The most ancient of his biographers wrote within twenty years of his death, and is supposed to have been Bridferth, the commentator on the philosophical works of Beda.—(Mabil. Act. Bened. sæc. v. p. 654.) The author had been at Canterbury in the time of Dunstan, and had learned some of the particulars which he relates from the archbishop himself, some from his disciples:—Quæ vel videndo vel audiendo, licet intellectu torpente, ab ipso didiceram, vel etiam ex ejus alumnis. From these disciples it is probable that he derived his account of the more early years of that prelate. His work was published by the Bollandists, from a manuscript belonging to the monastery of St. Vedast at Arras. —(Act. Sanct. Maii, tom. iv. p. 346.) Another manuscript copy is in the British Museum.—(Cott. MS. Cleop. B. xiii.) It is plain that many strange and apocryphal tales respecting the wonders wrought by Dunstan were current even when Bridferth wrote; many were collected and embellished by his Anglo-Norman biographers about a century later.

[2] MS. Cleop. B. xiii. Osbern, Vit. Duns. p. 91. The monk adds a curious observation respecting the frequent peregrinations of the Irish: "Hicque mos cum plerosque tum vehementer adhuc manet Hibernos;

Before he quitted the roof of his instructors, he was possessed of every acquirement which was then taught in seminaries of learning. To the familiar use of the Latin tongue he joined a competent knowledge of philosophy: the Holy Scriptures and the works of the ancient Fathers had been the subjects of his assiduous meditation; and his proficiency in the various arts of music, painting, engraving, and working in the metals, as it was more easily appreciated, was universally and deservedly applauded.

With these accomplishments Dunstan was introduced by his uncle Athelm, archbishop of Canterbury, to the notice of King Athelstan.[1] His conduct at court did not belie his former reputation: but we are told that the favour of the prince alarmed the jealousy of his competitors; that suspicions injurious to his character were whispered in the royal ear; that he was charged with the practice of sorcery, and a predilection for the heathen poetry of the ancient Saxons;[2] and that, after

quia quod aliis bona voluntas in consuetudinem, hoc illis consuetudo vertit in naturam."—Ibid.

[1] It is no easy matter to reconcile the early history of Dunstan with the date assigned to his birth. According to Bridferth he was born during the reign of Athelstan—Hujus imperii temporibus oritur puer strenuus in West-Saxonum finibus.—(MS. Cleop. B. xiii. f. 60.) With him agree the chroniclers who fix Dunstan's birth in the first year of Athelstan's reign. The same date results from the notices of his death, which happened in 988, when he was in his sixty-fourth year. Hence we cannot remove his birth further back than the year 924. Now Athelm was dead, or died, in that year. How then could he introduce Dunstan to the court of Athelstan? That monarch himself died in 940, when Dunstan was only fifteen years old. What probability is there that he could at that age have excited the jealousy of rivals, who drove him from the court? Hence I attach little credit to the information which Bridferth procured at Canterbury, concerning the more early portion of Dunstan's life. His real history begins from the time when we find him a recluse at Glastonbury, towards the end of the reign of Edmund.

[2] *Avitæ* gentilitatis vanissima didicisse carmina, et historiarum

a short struggle, he was compelled to retire from the prospect which had just opened to his ambition, and to confine himself to the house of his relation, Elphege, bishop of Winchester. During his disgrace, the unsuccessful courtier had leisure to meditate on the instability of his former pursuits, and to fix the plan of his future conduct. His choice was anxiously suspended between the two opposite states of wedlock and celibacy; whether he should prefer the pleasures and distinctions of a secular life, or embrace with its austerities the abject profession of a monk. It is on the bed of sickness that the hopes and fears of religion most powerfully exert their influence. The irresolution of Dunstan was protracted till a severe indisposition led him to the brink of the grave; the prospect of death added new weight to the arguments in favour of a religious life; and at his recovery he received from the hands of the bishop the order of priesthood with the monastic habit, and was appointed by him to officiate in the church in which he had been baptized, and had spent the earlier portion of his days.[1]

colere incantationes.—(MS. B. xiii. f. 63.) Does not the epithet *avitæ* show that poems were still extant which had been composed before the conversion of the Saxons?

[1] Mr. Wright tells us that "Dunstan was passionately enamoured of a maiden of great beauty, of a rank of life equal to his own, and endowed with accomplishments congenial to his own character; and that he sought to marry her."—(Biog. Brit. Lit. i. 447.) I suspect that this maiden, whose beauty, birth, and accomplishments are so accurately described, is a mere creature of the imagination. At least she has no existence in the works of the writers to whom we are referred for her history (Bridferth, f. 64, and of Osbern, p. 95). All that we learn from Bridferth is, that at first, Dunstan thought the company of a young wife preferable to the hard fare of a monk, but changed his mind during his sickness: from Osbern, that he deliberated quid in vita quam maxime appetendum fuisset, virtus an voluptas, uxor an virginitas. The lady herself first made her appearance in the pages of

At Glastonbury, his life was that of a man who devotes his whole attention to the faithful discharge of his duties, and who looks for the only reward of his piety in the testimony of his own conscience and the approbation of the Supreme Being.[1] His reputation, however, reached the ears of Ethelflede, a widow lady of royal descent and extensive possessions. She visited the recluse, was charmed with his conversation, and learned to revere his virtues. He was soon intrusted with the direction of her conscience, and at her death became the heir to her property. Had the mind of Dunstan thirsted after riches, it might now have been satisfied. The wealth of Ethelflede had already raised him to an equality with the proudest of his former opponents, when the decease of his father, Heorstan, placed also at his disposal the patrimonial estates of his family. But his retirement from the world had subdued his passions; the profession of poverty, which he had embraced, was sacred in his eyes; and he scrupulously divided both his own patrimony and the property of Ethelflede between the church and the poor.[2]

Soon after the death of Athelstan, Dunstan was drawn from the obscurity of his cell. At the prayer of Edmund, the next king, he condescended to visit and

Mr. Turner; but where she acquired her beauty and other accomplishments, I know not.

[1] It was during his residence here that occurred the celebrated conflict between him and the devil. The tale must have originated after the time of Bridferth; or he would not have omitted to record a victory so glorious for his hero.

[2] MS. Cleop. fol. 69. Act. SS. tom. iv. Maii, p. 350. Osb. pp. 98, 99. Yet even this action has been described as a mere bait to catch applause.—Turner, iii. 117.

edify the court. His compliance was rewarded with the gift of the royal manor and church of Glastonbury; and the ceremony of his installation was performed by the monarch himself. Taking Dunstan by the hand, he kissed him on the cheek, led him to the provost's seat in the chancel, and placed him in it with these words, "Take thou this seat as lord and master, and be thou of this church the trustworthy abbot."[1] Dunstan in this new situation soon displayed the energy of his character. He enlarged the buildings which had formed the king's villa, collected within them a small colony of monks, to whom he gave the rule of St. Benedict; and thus established a seminary, from which the order, after its extinction for almost two centuries, was again propagated through the kingdom of Wessex.[2] The friendship of Edmund was surpassed by the veneration of Edred, his brother and successor in 946. To the prudence of Dunstan that prince resigned the government of his conscience, of his finances, and almost of his kingdom; and, to reward his services, offered to him the rich and important

[1] Osb. p. 101. MS. Cleop. p. 72. The manner of his induction is thus related: Rex apprehensa ejus dextera, causa placationis seu etiam dignitatis osculatus est illum, ducensque ad sacerdotalem cathedram, et imponens illum in eam, dixit: Esto sedis istius princeps, potensque insessor et hujus ecclesiæ fidelissimus abbas.—MS. Cleop. f. 72.

[2] Et hoc prædicto modo saluberrimam Sancti Benedicti sequens institutionem, primus abbas Anglicæ nationis enituit.—(Ibid.) Monachorum ibi scholam primo primus instituere cœpit.—(Adalard, Ang. Sac. ii. 101, note.) In these passages both Bridferth and Adalard speak of the restored order without reference to its previous existence in England. We may suppose Dunstan's preferment to have taken place towards the end of Edmund's reign, as the first occasion on which we find him numbered among the great men, is at the coronation of Edred, when he signs his name "Dunstan Abbud," the last but one.—Cod. Dipl. ii. 269.

bishopric of Winchester. The motives of his refusal did honour to his modesty. He feared, was his reply, the severe responsibility attached to the episcopal dignity, and dared not accept an office, the obligations of which he could not accurately discharge, as long as he retained his situation near the king.[1] Edred admired his moderation, and reluctantly yielded, not to his reasons, but to his entreaties.

To Edred succeeded, in 955, the elder of his nephews, Edwy, a youth of sixteen or seventeen, whose character was already marked by the impetuosity of his passions. Until he received the regal unction, he appeared indeed to listen with some deference to the admonitions of Archbishop Odo; but from that moment he conceived himself above control; and on the very day of his coronation, when he was seated at table after dinner with the nobility and clergy, abruptly left the company to keep an appointment with a favourite female, of the name of Ethelgive, who, with her daughter, awaited his coming in a neighbouring apartment.[2] If we may listen to the scandal of the age, chastity was not her distinguishing virtue; nor did her visit to the royal youth originate in the most delicate motives.[3] A

[1] MS. Cleop. Osb. p. 103. It has been said that he refused the bishopric because Canterbury and not Winchester was the object of his ambition.—(Turner, iii. 150.) Yet he, like most of the archbishops of that period, might have been translated to the metropolitical from an inferior see.

[2] Ang. Sac. ii. 83. The name of the mother was Æthelgiva (sic erat nomen ignominiosæ mulieris.—MS. Cleop. p. 76).

[3] Huic quædam natione præcella, inepta tamen mulier per nefandum familiaritatis lenocinium sectando inhærebat, eotenus videlicet quo sese vel etiam natam suam *sub conjugali titulo illi innectendo sociaret* —Repente prosiluit lascivus ad prædictum scelus lenocinii—invenerunt illum inter utrasque volutantem.—(MS. Cleop. p. 76.) Duarum feminarum illic eum opperientium stupri ardore succensus.—(Ang. Sac. p. 83.)

general murmur spoke the indignation of the company. At their request, the abbot of Glastonbury, with the prelate Kynsey, entered the chamber; and the unwilling prince was persuaded or compelled to resume his seat. By the language of modern prejudice the share which Dunstan bore in this transaction has been magnified into an attempt to subdue the spirit of Edwy, and a daring insult to the royal authority: but let the reader advert to the manners of the age, and he will not be surprised, if the witan resented the abrupt departure of the king, or their messengers treated with little ceremony the women who had drawn him away.[1]

The affront, however, sunk deep into the mind of Edwy; and Dunstan, aware how grievously he had offended, withdrew after a while from the court, to bury himself in the obscurity of his cloister.[2] But

In complexum ganeæ devolutus.—(Malm. de Reg. i. 253.) The reader will excuse these quotations, which the incredulity of certain modern writers has rendered necessary. We are, indeed, told by Mr. Wright (Biog. Lit. i. 432), that "the proof that these calumnies" (the statements by the ancient biographers) "are false, is perfectly satisfactory. See Lappenberg, Gesch. von Eng. i. 399." But this must be a mistake. The proof is not there. Dr. Lappenberg has not entered into the controversy, nor referred to a single new authority.

[1] In support of this statement I have to contend against Carte, who has brought into the field a formidable auxiliary, William of Malmesbury. But if I can divest the monk of his modern armour, his efforts will be harmless. Let the reader compare the Latin original with Carte's English translation. The novel and ambiguous expression, proxime cognatam invadens uxorem, ejus formæ (vel forma) deperibat, Carte boldly renders, "the king had married a wife nearly related to him:" the decisive line, prorupit in triclinium in complexum *ganeæ* devolutus, is softened into an innocent visit "to the *queen's* apartment;" *lascivientem* juvenem, means no more than "playing at romps with his *wife and her mother:*" and *pellicem* repudiare is improved into a "divorce from his *wife*."—(Carte, v. i. p. 325. Malm. l. ii. c. 7, f. 30.) Hume condescended to echo the opinions of this historian; Henry inherited his art of translation.

[2] This was probably some months after the coronation; for in 956 he

Ethelgive was still at hand to keep alive the displeasure of her lover; a remonstrance addressed to the king by Archbishop Odo was attributed to the suggestion of Dunstan; and a resolution was taken to close at once the mouth of this importunate monitor. At first his monks were urged to rebel against him. The attempt failed. A party of thanes next entered his domain in hostile array, drove off the cattle, and plundered the abbey. Dunstan escaped; but it was in vain that he sought an asylum among his friends; his footsteps were traced from place to place, and so keen was the pursuit, that the ship which bore him from England was still in sight when his enemies appeared on the beach, with orders, it was said, to tear out his eyes.[1] He reached in safety the coast of Flanders, was received with hospitality by the Earl Arnulf, and retired to the monastery of St. Peter's in Ghent. His two abbeys of Glastonbury and Abingdon were dissolved by Edwy, and the monks, whom he had collected and formed with the view of resuscitating the order, were dispersed over the kingdom.

It is unfortunate that we know not the chronological order of the events which happened during the reign of Edwy. If we may believe a very ancient writer, the king in his second, perhaps his third year, was prevailed

signs an undoubted charter of Edwy with the title of dogmatista (Cod. Dipl. ii. 326); but this is the last time. His name is not to be found to any of the following charters of Edwy, though they are numerous.

[1] Ut ferunt, oculos illius, si in his maris littoribus inveniretur, eruendo dempsissent.—(MS. Cleop. 77.) Si comprehendi valeret, sine ullo respectu misericordiæ oculos ei erui præcepit.—(Eadmer, apud Sur. 237.) Parentela mulieris prosequens Sancti oculos eruere disponebat.—Wallingford, 543.

upon to marry; but at the same time he kept a mistress whom he had carried off by force, and whom he had placed for security in one of the royal villas. The scandal became public, and the archbishop, being informed of the fact, proceeded suddenly to the villa, took possession of the female, and sent her under an escort out of the kingdom. To Edwy he undertook to justify this bold proceeding, and with mild and parental language exhorted the young king to reform his conduct.[1] But adversity proved a more efficacious monitor than the archbishop. Edwy had abandoned himself to the counsels of men who, to secure his favour, pandered to his passions. All persons of his kindred were removed from court; of many thanes the lands were plundered by his direction; of others, the inheritances were seized; every order of men suffered from illegal exactions; and his grandmother, Eadgive, a princess revered for her age, rank, and character, by the whole nation, was deprived by him of all her property.[2] At

[1] Rex sub uxore propria alteram adamavit quam et rapuit . . . . Antistes autem Phineatico zelo stimulatus et ira Dei irritatus, repente cum sociis equum ascendit, et ad villam qua mulier mansitabat pervenit, eamque rapuit, et de regno perduxit, regemque dulcibus admonuit verbis pariterque factis, ut ab impiis actibus custodiret se, &c.—(MS. Nero, E. fol. 1 b.) See note (P).

[2] Unde quid mali succreverit, quam infamis fama populorum aures et ora repleverit, facile est et me tacente videre. Ipse namque possessiones plurimorum diripere, hos et illos exhereditare, majores natu proscribere, totumque regnum innumeris oppressionibus conturbare festinavit.—(Apud Eadmer. in Vit. S. Dunstani, 236. Col. Agrip. 1618.) Accessit his malis ejus nimis detestabile malum. Matrem quippe totius Angliæ nobilitatricem, ecclesiarum consolatricem, et sustentatricem oppressorum—in immensum afflixit, ac vastatis rebus ad ipsam pertinentibus, ab eo statu in quo esse solebat, sævus et crudelis dejecit.—(Ead. ibid.) Atavam suam prædari præcepit.—(MS. Cleop. 78.) Eadgive states the same in her charter published by Lye.—Þa Eadþeð ȝeendude and man Eadȝife bepýpte ælcne ape.—Lye, App. iv.

length the Mercians rose in arms against him, and Edwy fled for his life.[1] According to some writers, Ethelgive—whether they mean the female mentioned in the history of his coronation, or some other of the same name—accompanied him in his flight, but was surprised by his pursuers, and cruelly put to death.[2] The king had the good fortune to cross the Thames, and to save himself in Wessex. The Mercians chose his brother Edgar for their king; and the men of Kent and Wessex, unwilling to prolong a civil and disastrous contest for his sake, assented to a general meeting of thanes from both nations, in which it was determined that the Thames should form the boundary between the separate dominions of the two brothers. Edwy governed his portion in peace, and to the satisfaction of his subjects, but died prematurely in 959 or 960.[3]

The causes assigned by the ancient historians sufficiently account for the revolution which thus transferred the sceptre of Mercia from Edwy to the hands of his brother Edgar; but modern writers, setting contemporary testimony aside, have substituted other reasons, for which they are indebted to their own imaginations. By one we are told that Dunstan, thirsting for revenge, returned from Flanders, and

[1] Factum est ut in prætereuntibus annis penitus a brumali populo relinqueretur contemptus, quum in commisso regimine insipienter egisset, sagaces et sapientes odio vanitatis disperdens, et ignaros quosque sibi similes studio dilectionis adsciscens.—MS. Cleop. 78.

[2] Ang. Sac. ii. 106.

[3] Sicque universo populo testante publica res regum ex definitione sagacium segregata est, ut famosum flumen Tamense regnum disterminaret amborum.—(MS. Cleop. 78. Wallingford, 543. Mat. West. ad ann. 957.) This partition of the kingdom has perplexed the casuistry of Collier.—(Church Hist. i. 183.) The preceding passages might have relieved his doubts.

intrigued successfully with the thanes of Mercia; by another, that the monks, apprehensive of the same fate which had befallen their brethren in Wessex, implored the protection of their friends and patrons; by a third, that the insurrection was owing to the political influence of Archbishop Odo. But these fictions, the offspring of religious antipathy, can claim no support from ancient testimony, and are contradicted by every remaining document. Dunstan continued in Flanders till after the partition of the kingdom;[1] there were no monastic establishments in Mercia to fear the revenge of the king; and the men of Kent, among whom the influence of the archbishop chiefly lay, made common cause with the men of Wessex in his favour. Odo himself, instead of passing over to the party of Edgar, continued to the last the subject of Edwy, regularly attending his courts, and subscribing to his charters. He died, as far as I can collect, some months before the king,[2] and was accompanied to the grave by the tears and veneration of the people, who, as well as their

[1] MS. Cleop. 78. Chron. Sax. 117. Osbern, 107. Wigorn, 605. Westmon. 196.

[2] The dates in our chroniclers are often so contradictory that no reliance can be placed on them. In the Corpus Diplomaticum by Mr. Kemble, we find Odo regularly subscribing the charters of Edwy, till we come to one given by that prince in the fourth year of his reign, and the second indiction, evidently in 959. In the same year we meet with a charter by Edgar, king of Mercia, subscribed by Dunstan, as bishop of London, immediately below the archbishop of York. But in the next year, 960, we have two charters by Edgar as totius Britanniæ gubernator, and Anglorum basileus, subscribed by Dunstan as archbishop of Canterbury, and *above* the subscription of the archbishop of York; whence I infer that Odo died in 958, or the beginning of 959, and Edwy in 959 or 960. For Edwy was dead when Dunstan was made archbishop; and sufficient time had then elapsed from the death of Odo to allow for the election of Elfsy, his death on the Alps, and the arrival of the intelligence in England.

posterity, distinguished him with the name of "the good archbishop;"[1] a sufficient refutation of the calumnies with which his memory has been more recently assailed. We have still his book of Constitutions, which he sent with a letter of exhortation to the bishops of his province,—a letter breathing throughout a spirit of pastoral zeal, of fervent charity, and of the most profound humility. "Were it possible," he says, "that the wealth of the whole world were placed at my sovereign disposal, I would gladly distribute it all, and *spend myself* in addition (Cor. xii. 15), for the health of your souls . . . . . It is not on the ground of my own worth that I venture to offer advice or comfort to any one. No: aware of my unworthiness, and of my innumerable failings, I stand in need of advice and consolation from my brethren. But on account of the ancient authority of Augustine and the other holy men my predecessors, I have written this letter to you all, that Edmund, our august king, and all his people, may learn to practise the good which they see in us, and which they hear from us, and may rejoice to follow the example which we ourselves set to them. Farewell."[2] Could the prelate who wrote these lines be the monster of pride and inhumanity which he is said to have been in modern histories?

But to return to Edgar.—He had no sooner assumed the government of Mercia[3] than Dunstan was recalled

[1] Cognomine boni Odonis in materna lingua illum deinceps vocare solebat, videlicet *Odo se gode*, quo cognomine etiam usque hodie ab Anglis, sed maxime a Cantuaritis appellatur.—(Ang. Sac. ii. 86.) Þer ȝepaꞃ Oðo þe ȝoða Ꞅncebiꞃcop.—Chron. Sax. 117.

[2] Malm. de Pont. l. i. f. 141. Spelm. Con. 415.

[3] Ab utroque populo electus suscepit.—MS. Cleop. 78.

from banishment, and gradually advanced to the highest dignities in the church. His acceptance of these dignities has exposed him to the charge of hypocrisy and ambition; but it does not necessarily follow that the man acts inconsistently, who, at a later period of life, accepts an office which he had previously refused; when the apparent change in his sentiments may be fairly ascribed to the revolutions of the system in which he finds himself placed. Dunstan yielded to the importunity of the king, or the necessities of the church: as they became vacant, he accepted the bishopric of Worcester in 958, that of London in 959; and from them ascended, in consequence of the forced or voluntary withdrawal of Bishop Bryhthelm, to the metropolitan throne of Canterbury in 960.[1]

This rapid acquisition of wealth and power did not relax that vigour of character which had distinguished him in an inferior station. Faithful to what he con-

[1] On the demise of Odo, Elfsy or Elfsine, bishop of Winchester, was translated to the archiepiscopal see. By whom? By Edgar, if we may credit Osbern (p. 85), and Malmesbury, the follower of Osbern (De Pont. f. 114); but it is difficult to believe their testimony, unless we suppose that Edwy kept the archbishopric vacant till his death, and that Edgar passed by his favourite bishop Dunstan. Elfsine, in crossing the Alps to solicit the pallium at Rome, perished of cold; and was therefore generally omitted in the catalogue of the archbishops by the ancients, as he had never been confirmed by the Pope. When the news arrived, another election took place in favour of Bryhthelm, bishop of Sherborne; but he was ordered soon afterwards to be content with his former bishopric, and Dunstan was appointed in his place. My notion is, that Bryhthelm also was selected by Edwy, and set aside by Edgar, who succeeded to the throne immediately after his election. The reason assigned in the Biographia Literaria (i. 453), but without authority or reference, is, that "he was found opposed to the introduction of monachism, or, at least, not a sufficient promoter of it." Of any such pretext the ancients say nothing. According to them, he was of too easy and indulgent a temper for so important a situation—Nimis mansuetus pro reprimendis malis.—MS. Cleop.

ceived to be the true interests of religion, he permitted no consideration to allure him from the strict line of duty; and much as he loved the king and revered the pontiff, he would never shut his eyes to the vices of the one, nor blindly adopt the decisions of the other. The passions of Edgar were not less violent, though perhaps less obstinate, than those of his unfortunate brother. The monkish writers, whose credit has been impeached by modern prejudice, but whose veracity is strongly supported by the fidelity with which they record the vices of their greatest patron, have transmitted to us the history of his amours; and the efforts of the archbishop to restrain and to correct the passions of his sovereign do honour to his courage and virtue. In the convent of Wilton, Edgar had dared to violate the chastity of a noble female who resided with the nuns, and who, to elude his pursuit, had covered herself with the veil of one of the sisters. The infamy of the royal ravisher was speedily divulged; but, confident in his own power, he affected to despise the censure of the public. Dunstan received the news with the keenest anguish. As the guardian of religion, and the keeper of the royal conscience, he repaired to the court; represented in strong but respectful language the enormity of the offence; and demanded satisfaction for the insult which had been offered to the sanctity of the cloister. The heart of Edgar was softened; with tears he acknowledged his guilt; and submitted without a murmur to the penance,[1] severe as it was, which the

[1] If the reader wish to see a specimen of historical accuracy, he may consult the account of this transaction in Hume (c. ii. p. 86). "Edgar," says that writer, "broke into a convent," [he went there on a visit—

archbishop enjoined. During seven years he laid aside the use of his crown, thus exhibiting to his subjects the edifying spectacle of a penitent king; twice in the week he observed a rigorous fast; he distributed in doles to the poor the treasures which he had inherited from his father; and, to atone for the scandal which he had given, erected and endowed an opulent monastery for religious women. Dunstan had added two other conditions, with which he also complied, — that he should publish a code of laws for the more impartial administration of justice, and transmit, at his own expense, to the different counties, copies of the Holy Scriptures for the instruction of the people.[1]

In this transaction it may, perhaps, be said that Dunstan acted merely from the respect which he bore to his own character. But the purity of his motives

(Eadm. 218),] "carried off Editha," [her name was Wulfrith; her daughter by Edgar was Editha (Malm. de Reg. l. ii. c. 8, f. 33),] "a nun," [she was pupil to the nuns. Inter sanctimoniales non velata nutriebatur.—(Eadm. p. 218.) Certum est non tunc sanctimonialem fuisse, sed puellam laicam.—(Malm. ibid. et de Pont. l. ii. f. 143),] "by force, and even committed violence on her person. That he might reconcile himself to the church, he was obliged, not to separate himself from his mistress," [they did separate, and Wulfrith became a nun in the same convent (Malm. de Pont. l. ii. f. 143. Gotselin, in Vit. Edith. p. 637),] "but to abstain from wearing his crown during seven years, and to deprive himself so long of that vain ornament," [that this was but the smallest part of his penance may be seen above]. The historian may have been misled in some of the circumstances by an ambiguous expression of Malmesbury (ibid. f. 33); but it was his duty to have collated the different passages, and not to have incautiously imposed on himself, and on the credulity of his readers.

[1] If this be true, I do not see why the papistic prelate Dunstan has not as good a claim to the honours of a *reformer* as either Alfred or Ælfric. See the curious remark of Wise in his letter to Mores (Comment. de Ælfr. p. xxix.). But I suspect the true reading in Osbern to be, justas legum rationes sanciret, *sancitas conscriberet*, *scriptas* per omnes fines imperii sui populis custodiendas mandaret—and not *sanctas conscriberet scripturas*, as the words stand in the printed copies.

may be lawfully inferred from the uprightness of his conduct on other occasions, when, without the prospect of glory or the fear of infamy, he hesitated not to dare the resentment of the pontiff as freely as that of the king. A nobleman, distinguished by his rank and opulence, had taken to his bed a near relation; and Dunstan had repeatedly admonished him to dissolve the incestuous connection. It was in vain that the marriage was declared void, and that the sentence of excommunication severed the culprit from the society of the faithful. Secure behind the protection of Edgar, he despised the thunders of the metropolitan, and appealed from the injustice of the Saxon to the equity of the Roman bishop. The credulity of the pontiff was surprised, and Dunstan received a papal mandate to revoke his censures, and restore the offender to his former privileges. "I will obey," was the reply of the inflexible prelate, "when I shall see him sorry for his crime. But God forbid that I consent to transgress the divine law for the love or fear of any mortal man, or the preservation of my life." The firmness of this answer astonished and overcame the nobleman. He separated from the object of his passion, and submitted to ask forgiveness in the public synod. The primate, charmed with his obedience and the sincerity of his repentance, raised him from the ground, gave him the kiss of peace, and admitted him to the holy communion.[1]

The reader is already aware that in many places the collegiate or monasterial clergy lived in the open vio-

[1] Eadm. Vit. Dun. p. 215.

lation of their original rule.[1] Now it could not be expected that, under a metropolitan of this unbending character, their delinquency would be suffered to escape unnoticed or unpunished. It was, probably, during his banishment that Dunstan first conceived the idea of restoring the severity of the ancient discipline. At that period the prelates of Flanders were industriously engaged in such attempts; and he had the opportunity of witnessing the success of their exertions. The very monastery in which he resided at Ghent had, only a few years before, belonged to a society of secular canons; but the irregularity of their conduct had awakened the zeal of the abbot Gerard, and they had been compelled to yield their places to a community of Benedictine monks, who, by their rule, were bound to a greater austerity of life, and were warned, by the fate of their predecessors, to practise with exactitude the duties of their institute.[2] As soon as Dunstan saw himself at the head of the Saxon church, he determined to pursue the same plan; but the ardour of his zeal was tempered by the suggestions of prudence. His first essay was to raise the monastic order from that depreciated state into which it had fallen. At his own expense he founded a convent at Westminster; the monks, who had been expelled by the vengeance of Edwy, were invited to return to the abbeys of Glastonbury and Abingdon; and the zeal of the opulent and

[1] See the last chapter, p. 237.

[2] Eliminata abinde clericorum irreligiositate, licet jactitarent sese ventosa nobilitate, melioratis quibusque cœnobitarum religionem non distulit subrogare.—(Vit. St. Gerar. in Act. Bened. sæc. v. p. 272.) It is recorded to the praise of the abbot Gerard, that he reformed in this manner no less than eighteen monasteries.—Ibid. p. 273.

the pious was carefully directed to the restoration of the old, and the erection of new monasteries. In addition, the most eminent of the order were gradually raised to the highest dignities in the church; and the several bishoprics, as they became vacant, were filled by prelates taken from the abbeys so recently founded or restored. But the two whom the primate chiefly honoured with his confidence, were the monks Oswald and Ethelwold. Oswald, nephew to the late Archbishop Odo, had resigned the deanery of Winchester, that he might learn the rudiments of a monastic life in the abbey of Fleury, in France. Thence he returned, at the requisition of Odo, to England; but finding on his arrival that his uncle was dead, he travelled to Rome with Oskitell, archbishop of York, and after a short visit to his brethren at Fleury, attached himself to the person of that prelate. Dunstan, who had heard of his merit, invited him to Canterbury, and after some delay proposed to resign in his favour the bishopric of Worcester, which he still held in conjunction with Canterbury. Edgar willingly assented; the clergy and people of Worcester ratified the choice with their acclamations; and Oswald was consecrated bishop in the year 962.[1]

Ethelwold had been the companion and disciple of Dunstan at Glastonbury; but the superior reputation of the monks at Fleury led him to think also of emigrating to that celebrated abbey, when King Edred, to detain him in England, gave to him the site and ruins of the monastery of Abingdon, which had been

[1] Eadmer, Vit. Osw. in Ang. Sac. ii. 193—198.

destroyed by the Danes. There he settled with a few monks from Glastonbury, and, having restored the buildings, sent his friend Osgar to Fleury, that he might bring back a more perfect knowledge of the rule practised in that house. His attachment to the cause of monachism was well known to Dunstan, and in 963 he was promoted to the bishopric of Winchester.[1]

Though the archbishop could depend on the co-operation of both these prelates in the reformation which he meditated, he was aware that opposition on the part either of the pontiff or of the king must prove fatal to his hopes. But these apprehensions were soon removed. The messengers, who had been despatched to Rome, returned with a favourable answer;[2] and Edgar readily promised his protection to an enterprise which he was taught to consider glorious to himself, and beneficial to his people. Armed with the papal and regal authority, Dunstan summoned a general council, in which the king pronounced (if ever he pronounced) the discourse preserved by the abbot of Rieval.[3] With a considerable display of eloquence, he described to the members the degeneracy of the clergy belonging to some of the principal sees; lamented the misapplication of the revenues which the piety of his ancestors had bestowed upon the church; exhorted the prelates to punish the guilty with all the severity of ecclesiastical discipline; and offered to support their decisions with the whole

[1] Wolstan, Vit. Æthel. 612—614. Chron. Sax. ann. 963.

[2] Fretus auctoritate Johannis apostolicæ sedis antistitis apud regem obtinuit, quatenus canonici, qui caste vivere nollent, ecclesiis depellerentur, et monachi loco eorum intromitterentur.—Eadm. p. 219. See also his Life of St. Oswald, p. 200.

[3] Int. Dec. Scrip. p. 360. I should rather think it was a declamation composed by some monk, in imitation of the ancient historians.

power of the crown. Before the council separated, it was enacted that every priest, deacon, and subdeacon should live chastely, or resign his benefice; and the execution of the law was intrusted to the zeal of Dunstan, Oswald, and Ethelwold.[1] It is, however, observable, that from this moment the archbishop disappears from the scene, and relinquishes to his two associates the whole glory of conducting and completing the enterprise. Whether it was that the clergy of Canterbury were exempt from the vices ascribed to many of their brethren, or that they were too powerful to be attacked with impunity, he made no effort to expel them from the possession of his cathedral. It was principally in the dioceses of Worcester and Winchester that the subjects of complaint existed; and in them the reformers first endeavoured to execute their commission.

Of Oswald we are told that he introduced monks in the place of clergymen into seven churches within his bishopric; but there is reason to believe that some of the seven were new foundations, and that in some of the others the change was effected with the full consent of the canons themselves. In his cathedral he succeeded by the following artifice. Having erected in its vicinity a new church to the honour of the Virgin Mary, he intrusted it to the care of a community of monks, and frequented it himself for the solemn celebration of mass. The presence of the bishop attracted that of the people; the ancient clergy saw their church gradually abandoned; and after some delay, Wensine,

[1] Eadm. Vit. Oswal. p. 200; Wilk. pp. 239, 247.

their dean, a man advanced in years, and of unblemished character, took the monastic habit, and was advanced three years later to the office of prior. The influence of his example, and the honour of his promotion, held out a strong temptation to his brethren; till at last the number of the canons was so diminished by repeated desertions, that the most wealthy of the churches of Mercia became, without dispute or violence, by the very act of its old possessors, a monastery of Benedictine monks.[1] In what manner Oswald proceeded with the other churches, we are ignorant; but in 971 he became archbishop of York; and though he held that high dignity during twenty years, we do not read that he introduced a single colony of monks, or changed the constitution of a single clerical establishment, within the arch-diocese.[2] The reason is unknown.

To the zeal of Ethelwold was opposed a more vigorous and determined resistance. The clergy of Winchester were the sons of noble families, equally unwilling to surrender their pleasures or their preferments. Depending on the influence of their friends, they secretly derided the impotent menaces of the bishop, and in public received his exhortations with repeated but insincere professions of amendment. Still the irregularity of their conduct is said to have been such, that it would have justified the severest treatment. The ample revenue of their benefices they spent in

[1] Eadm. p. 202; Ang. Sac. i. 542; Hist. Rames. p. 400.

[2] Dunstan requested him to retain the bishopric of Worcester, quoad personam tantæ rei idoneam, Deo monstrante, illi substituere posset.—(Eadm. p. 204.) He kept it till his death.

idleness and luxury; the decorations of the church were neglected; the celebration of the public worship was abandoned to the piety of mercenary substitutes; and some, if we may believe the scandal of the times, lived in the open violation of the canons respecting clerical continency.[1]

The patience of Ethelwold was at last exhausted; and he requested the royal permission to introduce in their place a colony of monks. Edgar was, or appeared to be, unwilling to deprive the clergy of their ancient property, and advised the bishop to remove the more incorrigible of the canons, and to bestow their benefices on those whom they had hitherto employed to perform their duties.[2] This expedient, however, produced but a temporary amendment. So partial a punishment was, perhaps, regarded as a victory; the new canons adopted the manners of their predecessors; and Edgar at last abandoned them to the severity of their bishop. On a Saturday in Lent, during the celebration of mass, Ethelwold, attended by a royal deputy, entered the choir, and throwing on the ground a bundle of cowls, addressed the astonished prebendaries:—"The time

[1] Clerici illi, nomine tenus canonici, frequentationem chori, labores vigiliarum, et ministerium altaris vicariis suis utcunque sustentatis relinquentes, et ab ecclesiæ conspectu plerumque absentes septennio, quidquid de præbendis percipiebant, locis et modis sibi placitis absumebant. Nuda fuit ecclesia intus et extra.—(Annal. Winton. p. 289.) The character given to them by Wolstan, their contemporary, is equally unfavourable. Erant canonici nefandis scelerum moribus implicati, elatione et insolentia, atque luxuria præventi, adeo ut nonnulli eorum dedignarentur missas suo ordine celebrare, repudiantes uxores, quas illicite duxerant, et alias accipientes, gulæ et ebrietati jugiter dediti.—Wolstan, Vit. Ethel. p. 614.

[2] Malens per canonicos, quam per aliud genus arctioris religionis, ministrari negotium, ablatas quibusdam eorum præbendas contulit vicariis.—Annal. Winton. p. 290.

is come," he exclaimed, "when you must finally determine. Put on the monastic habit, or depart; you have no other choice." Their murmurs were silenced by the presence of the officer, and three reluctantly consented to change their profession.[1] The rest retired in sullen discontent. Still the humanity of Ethelwold did not abandon them to the privations of poverty. From the episcopal domain, he selected the most convenient manors, and assigned them for the support of the ejected clergy.[2] Their places were supplied by a confraternity of monks from the monastery of Abingdon.

Animated by this success, Ethelwold proceeded rapidly in the work of reformation and expulsion. At Winchester, the new minster, which had been founded by Alfred the Great, and completed by Edward, his successor, was still inhabited by the clergy: after a decent respite of twelve months, they received an order to depart; and the additional establishment of two abbeys, one for monks, and a second for nuns, confirmed the reign of monachism within the walls of

[1] For this transaction see Wolstan (Vit. S. Ethel. p. 614); Annales Winton. (p. 289); Eadmer (Vit. S. Dunst. p. 219); Malmesbury (de Reg. l. ii. c. vii. f. 31, de Pont. l. ii. f. 139); and Rudborne (Hist. Mag. p. 218). The Saxon Chronicle only observes, that the canons were ejected because they refused to observe any rule: forðan þ hi noldon nan regul healdan.—Chron. Sax. ann. 963, p. 117.

[2] Malm. de Pont. l. ii. f. 139. Ethelwold was also a great benefactor to his cathedral, which he in a great measure rebuilt in the year 980.—(Ibid. p. 621.) He afterwards laid the foundations of an additional chapel at the east end—nam fundamen ovans a cardine jecit *eoo* (Wolst. Carm. p. 630); but he lived not to complete it. The work was continued by Elphege, his successor, who added the crypts, which still remain. See a very circumstantial account of both buildings in Wolstan's poem, out of which I shall transcribe the description of the tower and vane erected by Elphege, as a favourable specimen of the abilities of the poet. Note (Q).

the royal city. The clerical monasteries of Chertsey and Milton soon shared the same fate; and the abbeys of Ely, Thorney, and Medeshamstede, the sites of which he had purchased from the king, rose from their ashes, and recovered their ancient splendour.[1] The services of Ethelwold were not forgotten by the gratitude of his brethren, who have styled him in their writings "muneca fæder," the father of monks. But this was not his only praise. He was also the father of another class of men,—the poor of his diocese. They were the daily objects of his solicitude, and found him at all times ready to make any sacrifice for their relief. On one occasion—it was in a season of scarcity, when the people were perishing around through want and the insalubrity of their food—he did not hesitate to break in pieces the plate of the altar, and to strip his church of its most costly ornaments, that he might purchase a supply of wholesome provisions, which were carefully distributed among the sufferers by agents acting under his directions. He died in 984.[2]

The reign of Edgar was a period of triumph for the monastic order. Under the protection of that prince more than forty monasteries are said to have been established by the three bishops. But there is probably some exaggeration in the amount; and, if we may judge from the names which have come down to us, many of them were new foundations in places where no monastery had previously existed, or where the old monastery had been destroyed. The monks obtained,

[1] Chron. Sax. ad ann. 963, 964, pp. 117, 118, 122; Wolst. pp. 615, 616.

[2] Wolstan, 617, 623; Chron. Sax. 125; Malm. de Pont. 244.

indeed, possession of the cathedrals of Winchester and Worcester; but the other episcopal churches remained in the hands of the clergy, and were retained by them, with one exception, till the close of the Anglo-Saxon period. That exception was of Christchurch, in Canterbury. It had passed the ordeal in the time of St. Dunstan, but was taken from the clergy to be given to the monks by King Ethelred in 1003 or 1006, at the prayer of Archbishop Ælfric, a prelate who, from the monastery of Abingdon, had been raised successively to the abbotcy of St. Alban's, the bishopric of Wilton, and the archiepiscopal mitre.[1]

In reviewing the transactions to which this revolution in monastic economy gave birth, it is amusing to contrast the language of the historians who lived before the Reformation with that of others who wrote after it. From the former, Dunstan, Oswald, and Ethelwold are sure to receive a due share of praise for the energy with which they put down the scandalous excesses of men who were a disgrace to their order; while the latter, with a warmth and interest which appear rather suspicious, espouse the cause of the ejected clergy against the superstitious tyranny of the three popish prelates. They see nothing in the sufferers but innocent married priests, "clergymen living

[1] Ang. Sac. ii. 201; Chron. Sax. 128; Spelm. Con. 504; More's Comment. de Ælf. p. 84. Of the transfer of the church there is no doubt; the authenticity of the charter is questionable. It is subscribed by Ælfric in 1006, and the death of that prelate is assigned to 1005.—(Chron. Sax. 134.) In the charter the prebendaries are termed *cultores* clerici, a singular expression, which seems to intimate that the collegiate clergy were even then styled *Culdees*—cultores Dei—in the south as well as the north of England. There is also a very suspicious charter giving the church of Sherborne to the monks.

piously in legitimate matrimony."[1]—This is the head and front of their offending; this the crime for which they are deprived of their livings to benefit a favoured class of religionists, whose principal merit is the profession of celibacy. It is, perhaps, still more singular that these phrases and charges have been repeated so frequently as to impose on writers, who, from their acquaintance with Anglo-Saxon history, ought to have known better, and yet have, unconsciously, it would appear, echoed the same tale in defiance of the very authorities to which they appeal. For it should be remembered that this quarrel of the three reforming bishops was not with the great body of the rural and district clergy, but was confined to the canons of some conventual churches, who had secularized themselves by their own authority, as has been noticed in the last chapter. Of these it is generally affirmed, and probably with much truth, that they led dissipated and dissolute lives; but the only specific charge which has come down to us, attaches to the prebendaries of Winchester alone; and not to them as a body, but only to certain individuals among them,

[1] In the Antiquitates Britannicæ of Archbishop Parker, and the Præsules Anglicani of Bishop Godwin, the eye is fatigued with the constant recurrence of the words, sacerdotes in legitimo matrimonio pie viventes. It was too grateful a phrase to be soon forgotten, and has accordingly come down to us in the same or an equivalent form, from writer to writer, even to the present day. How far the priests in question deserved the praise of "living piously in lawful matrimony," may be learned from the description given of them in one of the "ordinances of the witan," in the national assembly held at Eynesham, near Oxford, in the reign of Ethelred. "Full well they know that they cannot rightfully, through any concubinage, have intercourse with woman; but it is the worse that some have two women or more, and that one, though he have forsaken her whom he had before, yet he, she being still alive, taketh another, as is not allowable for any Christian to do."—Ethelred's Dooms, Thorpe, i. 316.

that "they were grown too proud to minister at mass according to their order, and that, having repudiated the wives whom they had unlawfully taken, they had replaced them with other women."[1] It is probable that in other places similar excesses may have been committed;[2] but it is certain that the canons of every secularized church, whether they respected their vow of continence or not, from the moment that they ceased to live in community, continued to live in the daily transgression of the duties of their profession. It was to put down this innovation, to recall the prebendaries to the observance of their statutes, that Oswald and Ethelwold undertook to carry into execution the dictum of Dunstan, "Let them choose between the two; they must live according to rule, or must quit their churches."[3] Many after this returned to their duties; the refusal of the others was visited with deprivation: still in one instance, as we have seen—probably in the others—a

[1] The last note shows that such is the true meaning of the following testimony of Wolstan: Adeo ut *nonnulli* eorum dedignarentur missas suo ordine celebrare, repudiantes uxores quas illicite duxerant, et alias accipientes, gulæ et ebrietati jugiter dediti.—(Wolstan, 614.) Yet Mr. Wright has appealed to it as proof that "*all* the canons contracted marriages and second marriages as laymen."—(Biog. Brit. Lit. i. 437.) He then proceeds to hint, on the presumed authority of the Saxon Chronicle, that the real cause of their ejection was their unwillingness to submit to the *monastic* rule.—(Ibid.) But the Chronicle states a very different thing: that they were unwilling to submit to any rule at all—nan regul. (See p. 267, note.) Had they consented to observe their own rule, the statutes of their own order, they would never have been molested.

[2] Osbern confines these irregularities to certain churches, quibusdam in locis (Ang. Sac. ii. 112); and that many collegiate churches of regular canons were retained, is plain from the repeated mention of them in the laws at a later period, punishing the prebendaries with the loss of their livings, if they did not live chastely, and eat and sleep in their monastery.—Thorpe, i. 306, 316.

[3] Aut canonice est vivendum, aut ecclesiis exeundum.—Ang. Sac. ii. 112.

decent provision was made for their support out of the lands of the bishopric.

To secure the permanence of these infant establishments was the next object that engaged the attention of the reforming prelates. Of the charters, which, at their solicitation, Edgar granted to the different monasteries, many are still extant, and are filled with the most dreadful anathemas against those whose impiety should presume to molest the monks in the possession of their new habitations. To the temporal authority of the king were superadded the spiritual censures of the bishops; and their conduct was approved by the rescripts of the sovereign pontiff. Yet Dunstan foresaw that the time might arrive when these precautions would prove feeble barriers against the attempts of superior power; and when the clergy, under the protection of the king and the bishops, might resume possession of the churches from which they had been expelled. To remove, as far as it was possible, the probability of such an event, a council was summoned to meet at Winchester, in which it was proposed to invest the monks with the right of choosing the bishop of the vacant see, and to bind them at the same time to select the object of their choice from their own or some neighbouring monastery. By the patrons of the measure it was urged, that in the conventual cathedrals the bishop occupied the place and the authority of the abbot; that it was his duty, in this capacity, to inspect the morals of his monks, and to enforce the observance of their rule; and that to intrust so important a charge to a man who had not been educated in monastic discipline, would infallibly open a way to innovation and

degeneracy. The reasoning was plausible; it satisfied the judgment of the king and the prelates; and the proposition was unanimously adopted. Thus a certain number of voices was secured in the episcopal college; and in every emergency the monks might look up with confidence to the bishops, whom they had chosen, and whom affection and gratitude would bind to espouse the interests of the order.[1]

In the same assembly was adopted another regulation, which, while it aspired to the merit of introducing uniformity among the different monasteries, possessed the superior advantage of more closely connecting all the members of the monastic body. At the recommendation of the king, who probably was no more than the echo of the archbishop, the customs of the celebrated monasteries of Fleury and Ghent were ingrafted on the original rule of St. Benedict; and to these were added some of the observances which had distinguished the Saxon cenobites before the Danish invasions.[2] The Concord of the English monks (so it was termed) is still extant; but an abstract of it would probably be

[1] Selden's Eadmer, note, p. 150; Apost. Bened. app. 3, p. 78. It is observable that the monks were ordered to choose the bishop according to the directions of their rule respecting the election of abbots, but with the consent and advice of the king (regis consensu et concilio).—(Ibid.) This regulation was soon violated, and clergymen were elected to the episcopal dignity in the churches possessed by monks, though Benedict XIV. has inadvertently asserted the contrary.—De Syn. Dioc. vol. iii. p. 344.

[2] Honestos hujus patriæ mores ad Dominum pertinentes, quos veterum usu didiscimus, nullo modo abjicere, sed undique corroborare decrevimus.—(Apost. Bened. in Anglia, p. 85.) St. Ethelwold composed a small treastise de Diurna Consuetudine Monachorum. It is extant in the Cotton MS. Tib. A. 3; Wanley, p. 92. The daily allowance of his monks at Abingdon is described in the Monasticon Anglicanum, tom. i. p. 104.

uninteresting to the reader.[1] It is wholly confined to a variety of regulations respecting the minutiæ of the monastic service, and a few fanciful practices of devotion, which, however, it is left to the discretion of the superior to adopt or reject, as he may think most conducive to the interests of virtue and piety.[2]

During the long reign of Edgar, the ejected clergy were condemned to bewail in silence the loss of

[1] The preface is published by Selden among his notes on Eadmer, in Latin and Saxon (p. 145); and the whole work in Latin by Reyner in his third appendix to the Apostolatus Benedictinorum (p. 77). Though it seems to comprehend all the monasteries in England, Turketul, the abbot of Croyland, did not conceive himself bound by its regulations, but ordered the ancient customs of his monastery to be inviolably observed. There the monks were divided into three classes. The first comprised those who had not spent four-and-twenty years in the abbey; and these were subject to all the duties imposed by the rule of St. Benedict. After the expiration of that term, and during the next fifteen years, they belonged to the second class, and were exempted from the more tedious observances, and permitted to discharge by deputies their respective duties. From the fortieth to the fiftieth year they enjoyed still greater indulgences, and the only thing required from them was a daily attendance at the high mass. If they survived this period, they were entirely freed from compulsory duties. A chamber was allotted to each, with a servant to wait on him, and a young monk for his companion.—See Ingulf, f. 503, 504.

[2] Hæc inserenda curavimus, ut si quibus devotionis gratia placuerint, habeant in his unde hujus rei ignaros instruant; qui autem noluerint, ad hoc agendum minime compellantur.—(Apost. Ben. p. 86.) A singular ceremony was recommended for the feast of Easter. Towards the close of matins, a monk retired into a species of sepulchre, prepared in the church, and three others, with thuribles in their hands, and their eyes fixed on the ground, walked slowly along the choir. After some delay, a voice issued from the sepulchre, chanting the anthem, "Whom do you seek?" They replied, "Jesus of Nazareth." "He is not here," resumed the voice; "He is risen, as he said. Go and tell his disciples."—(Matt. xxviii. 6.) Turning towards the choir, they immediately sang the anthem, "The Lord is risen," &c., when they were recalled by the voice to the sepulchre, with the words of the angel, "Come and see the place where the Lord lay."—(Matt. ibid.) They entered, and returned bearing before them a winding-sheet, and singing, "The Lord is risen from the grave." The prior in thanksgiving intoned the Te Deum, and the office was continued in the usual manner.—Apost. Ben. p. 89. See note (R).

their possessions; but their present discontent was soothed with the hope of obtaining ample indemnity from the equity or weakness of his successor. That successor was a boy; and an ambitious stepmother attempted to transfer the crown from his temples to those of her own son. This season of confusion and doubtful loyalty appeared propitious to their design. Alfere, duke of Mercia, was the first to unfurl the standard of the clergy; their adherents, moved by compassion, or allured by presents, were eager to copy his example; and in several provinces the monks were ignominiously expelled from their convents by the swords of their enemies.[1] But army was soon opposed to army; and Alwine, ealdorman of East Anglia, his brother Alfwold, and the Earl Brihtnode, declared themselves the protectors of the monks. The kingdom was menaced with the horrors of a civil war, from the passions of the opposite parties, when their chieftains were induced to argue the merits of their respective claims in a council at Winchester. The issue proved unfavourable to the clergy. The efforts of Dunstan and the bishops had succeeded in fixing the crown on the head of Edward, the eldest son of the deceased monarch; and their preponderance insured to the monks an easy victory.[2] Scarcely, however, had four years elapsed, when the complaints of the clergy and the clamours of

[1] Wigor. ad ann. 975; Hoved. ad ann. 975, f. 245; Ingulf, f. 506. In the Saxon Chronicle the sufferings of the monks form the subject of a short poem.—Chron. Sax. p. 123.

[2] In this or some other council held at Winchester (for historians do not agree respecting the time), it is said that a voice issued from a crucifix, exclaiming, "All is well; make no change." This tale was unknown to the more ancient historians, and is nothing more than a popular tradition, adopted, and perhaps improved, by later writers.

their friends were revived, and another council was summoned to meet at Calne. But, in the heat of the debate, the floor of the room sunk under the weight of numbers; and the whole assembly, except the archbishop, who fortunately held by a beam, was precipitated to the ground. Amidst the ruins and the confusion many were dangerously wounded, and others lost their lives. This melancholy accident decided the controversy. The pious credulity of the age ascribed the fall of the floor and the preservation of Dunstan to the interposition of Heaven; and the clergy at length desisted from a contest in which they believed that both God and man were their adversaries.

Such is the plain unvarnished history of the synod of Calne; but on this narrow basis a huge superstructure of calumny and fable has been raised by religious prejudice.[1] Dunstan, we are are told, harassed by the repeated attempts of the clergy, trembled for the permanency of his favourite establishments, and resolved to terminate the quarrel by the destruction of his opponents. By his order the floor of the room destined to contain the assembly was loosened from the walls; during the deliberation, the temporary supports were suddenly withdrawn; and in an instant the nobles, the clergy, and the other members were promiscuously cast among the ruins; while the archbishop, secure in his seat, contemplated with savage satisfaction the bloody scene below. But the atrocity of the deed, the silence of his contemporaries, the impolicy of involving in the same fate his friends as well as his adversaries,

[1] Hist. of the Anglo-Sax. vol. iii. pp. 190, 191.

must provoke a doubt in favour of the primate; and even those who have been taught to think disadvantageously of his character will at least demand some evidence of his guilt before they venture to pronounce his condemnation. No such evidence has been, or can be produced. By contemporary and succeeding writers the fall of the floor was attributed to accident, or the interposition of Heaven; the sanguinary contrivance of Dunstan was a secret, which, during almost eight centuries, eluded the observation of every historian, and was first, I believe, revealed to the scepticism of Hume, who introduced his suspicion to the public under the modest veil of a possibility.[1] But suspicion has quickly ripened into certitude; and the guilt of the archbishop has been pronounced without doubt or qualification. Nor (the omission is inexplicable) has his accuser claimed the merit of the discovery; but left his incautious readers to conclude that he had derived his information from the respectable authorities to whom he boldly appeals.[2] They, however, seem to have been ignorant of the charge, and have contented themselves with translating the simple narrative of the Saxon Chronicle, the most faithful register of the times. "This year the principal nobility of England fell at Calne from an upper floor, except the holy Archbishop Dunstan, who clung to a beam. And some were

[1] Hist. c. ii. Should, however, any friend of Archbishop Parker assign to that prelate the merit of the discovery, I shall not dispute the priority of his claim. This, at least, is certain, that he ascribed the misfortune at Calne to a conspiracy between the devil and the monks.—Humana fraude et ope diabolica carere non potuit.—Antiq. p. 87.

[2] Malm. p. 61; Flor. Wig. p. 361; Sim. Dun. p. 160.

grievously hurt, and some did not escape with their lives."[1]

In 988, Dunstan had grown very feeble, and the festival of the Ascension in that year was the last day on which he performed the public service in his cathedral. As soon as the gospel had been read, he walked in state from the vestry to the pulpit, and preached with unwonted energy on the incarnation of the Saviour, the redemption of man, and the bliss of heaven. Coming back to the altar, he proceeded with the mass till the end of the Pater-noster, when he turned to the people, addressed them a second time, exhorting them to follow their head and leader to the realms of happiness, and pronounced over them the episcopal benediction.[2] He then gave the kiss of peace, and addressing the congregation for the third time, begged of them to remember him, when he was gone; for he felt that his hour was approaching, and that he

[1] On þyrrum ȝeap ealle þa ylðeȝtan Ænȝelcynneȝ pitan ȝeȝeollan æt Calne oþ anne up-ȝlopan butan ȝe halȝan Đunȝtan Ærcebiȝcop. ana æȝtoð uppon anum beame. ⁊ rume þæp ȝpiðe ȝebpocoðe pæpon. ⁊ rume hit ne ȝeðyȝðan mið þam liȝe.—(Chron. Sax. p. 124.) I shall add Huntingdon's translation: Omnes optimates Anglorum ceciderunt a quodam solio apud Calne præter sanctum Dunstanum, qui trabe quadam apprehensa restitit. Unde quidam eorum valde læsi sunt, quidam vero mortui.—Huntingdon, l. v. f. 204.

[2] The episcopal benediction was then given at that part of the mass which is now occupied by the words—Pax Domini sit semper vobiscum. On the festival of the Ascension it was given in these words:—Benedicat vos Omnipotens Deus, cujus hodierna die unigenitus cœlorum alta penetravit, et nobis, ubi ipse sedit, penetrandi aditum patefecit.—*Amen.* Concedat propitius ut, sicut post resurrectionem suam, discipulis manifestus, ita nobis in judicium veniens, videatur placatus.—*Amen.* Et qui eum considere Patri in sua majestate creditis, nobiscum manere usque in finem sæculi, juxta suam promissionem, sentiatis.—*Amen.* Quod ipse præstare dignetur, cujus regnum et imperium sine fine permanet in sæculum.—*Amen.* Benedictio Dei Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, et pax Domini sit semper vobiscum.—Et cum spiritu tuo. Here the kiss of peace was given.

should see them no more in this world. The tears of the people and clergy testified the feelings with which this announcement was received. The archbishop concluded the mass, and had sufficient strength to take his place at the usual banquet in the hall. Thence he returned to the church, pointed out the spot in which he wished to be interred, and withdrew to his chamber, where he spent that and the next day in exercises of devotion, and in advising and consoling those who visited him. On the Saturday, mass was celebrated in his apartment by his order, and, as soon as he had received the communion, he burst into the following prayer:—"Glory be to thee, Almighty Father, who hast given the bread of life from heaven to those that fear thee; that we may be mindful of thy wonderful mercy to man in the incarnation of thine only-begotten Son, born of the Virgin. To thee, Holy Father, for that when we were not, thou didst give to us a being, and when we were sinners, didst grant to us a Redeemer, we give due thanks through the same thy Son, our Lord and God, who, with thee and the Holy Ghost, maketh all things, governeth all things, and liveth through ages and ages without end." Shortly afterwards he expired, in the sixty-fourth or sixty-fifth year of his age.[1]

With the principal events of his life the reader is already acquainted. He took under his special protection the poor and powerless in his diocese; punished with heavy fines the use of fraudulent weights or measures, and delivered up to the utmost severity of

[1] Ang. Sac. ii. 116—119.

the law the fabricators and exchangers of false money.[1] For the accommodation of himself and his successors he built or rebuilt houses in the more distant manors of the bishopric, and added a church of timber-work to each of those mansions.[2] His leisure hours were spent in study, the reading of the holy Scriptures, and the correction of manuscripts. Of his eloquence we are told, that it was greatly admired; that it was difficult to listen to him without being convinced, so powerful were his arguments, and so fascinating his manner.[3] Nor did he confine his pastoral solicitude to his own diocese; his vigilance was extended to all the bishops of his province, whom he exhorted, encouraged, reprimanded, as circumstances might require. The following letter was written by him to Wulfsine, bishop of Sherborne, soon after the consecration of the latter; and the perusal of it will enable the reader to form his own judgment of the spirit which animated the writer.

[1] We are told by Eadmer, that when three moneyers, who had been taken with false money on their persons, and had been condemned to death, were respited on Whit-Sunday, out of reverence to the festival, the archbishop refused to celebrate mass till the sentence of the law had been carried into execution, protesting, at the same time, that his refusal arose not from want of feeling for the criminals, but out of compassion for the poor. He could not think of offering the sacrifice to God, as long as he did not do his duty to man; and no more important duty had he on his hands than to check by severity the avarice of men who with false c in plundered the poor no less than the rich. The meaning of the words—qui in potestate viri erant, has been much canvassed among the writers on Anglo-Saxon coins. To me they seem plainly to mean that the criminals were in the custody of the archbishop's officers, and therefore, in potestate viri.

[2] Ang. Sac. ii. 217.

[3] Nec facile erat quempiam auditorum ejus non esse docibilem; propterea quod tanta illi rerum subtilitas inerat, tanta dicendi facultas, ut nihil esset aut inventu sapientius, aut dictu ornatius, aut auditu jocundius.—Ang. Sac. ii. 110.

"To his faithful friend the Bishop Wulfsine, Archbishop Dunstan wisheth health and joy everlasting in the Lord God.

"Let us return thanks to God, who has pre-ordained us—unworthy as we are, and the least of his servants—to be governors of his church in these dangerous and most distracted times; and let us join in one common prayer, that through his almighty mercy he may aid us in the performance of every good work.

"Now, then, dearly beloved brother, be of good courage, and boldly fulfil the work of the Lord which you have in hand, so as to justify us, and to save the souls of many. Let not your tongue cease to preach, nor your hand to work, nor your foot to visit your flock. Give alms abundantly, and raise up everywhere the holy church of God. Be you a pattern of salvation to all men, an example of most holy life; a source of comfort to the afflicted and of counsel to the doubtful; show forth in your conduct the vigour of discipline, the confidence of truth, and the hope of virtue. Pride not yourself on the pomp of the world; indulge not in the pleasures of the table, nor in the vanity of dress; be not deceived by the tongue of flattery, nor disturbed by the clamours of gainsayers; suffer not adversity to depress, nor prosperity to elevate you. Be not as 'a reed shaken with the wind,' nor a flower drooping under the storm, nor a falling wall, nor 'a house built upon the sand;' but rather a temple of God, standing on the solid rock, and inhabited by the Holy Spirit. Let good men find you meek and humble, but the proud hard and inflexible. Become 'all to all men, that you may gain all.' Hold out in your

hands both honey and wormwood, to suit the wants of all; honey to him who is willing to feed on your doctrine, wormwood to him who stands in need of correction, yet so that he may still hope for the honey of pardon, if he submit to the confession of repentance.

"*Let all your things be done in order.* Let a portion of the day be selected for study, hours be appointed for prayer, and a convenient time be set aside for the celebration of mass. *He who regardeth the day, regardeth it for the Lord.* Let cheerfulness at your table be tempered with gravity. On fast-days, take care that your refreshment be moderate. Then 'wash your face' with tears of repentance for sin, and 'anoint your head with the oil' of charity to the poor. Let whatsoever you do be acceptable to the Lord God, who has 'chosen you a priest to himself.'

"Remind the ealdorman, and those in power, of their duties; to be lenient and merciful in their judgments; to love cleanness of heart and body—*Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God;* to protect the church of Christ, that the Lord of the church may help and protect them; to have pity on widows and orphans, that God may have pity on them; to be meek and kind to all men, aggregating and not dispersing the people of God, and keeping peace among themselves. *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God.*

"For yourself, beloved brother, have the love and fear of God constantly before your eyes; order also the Pastoral of our blessed father, Gregory, in which is faithfully described the life of both bishops and people, to be frequently read in your presence; and

often remember us in your prayers, that the mercy of God may defend, rule, and preserve us, and we may pass through life, as I am sure you wish, in the love and good pleasure of God. Think not these admonitions a work of supererogation or pride; but receive them with feelings of love; for 'the city is strong, when brother stands by brother.' May Almighty God grant to you everlasting salvation."[1]

Dunstan had moreover the merit of reviving among his countrymen the study of literature, which had been on the decline ever since the death of Alfred. Long before he ascended the metropolitan throne, and as soon as he could command the obedience of a small community of monks, he devoted his attention to this subject; the knowledge which he had derived from the Irish teachers at Glastonbury, he liberally imparted to his pupils, and these carried with them the spirit of improvement to the different monasteries to which they were sent.[2] Among them no one was more active than Ethelwold, who had fully imbibed the notions and feelings of his master. That prelate would often descend from his more important functions, to the humble employment of instructing children in the first rudiments of grammar, and of interrogating them respecting their progress in the knowledge of the Latin

[1] Mab. Act. SS. v. 239. It should be observed that Dunstan has copied a considerable part of this letter from one which had been written formerly by Alcuin to Eanbald, archbishop of York, on his election to that dignity.—See Alc. Oper. i. Ep. l. p. 63.

[2] Iꝛ nu ꝛoꝓꝺ Lobeꝛ ꝺeopum ⁊ mỳnꝛꝛep mannum ȝeopne ꝺo ꝓapnıȝenne ꝺ ꝛeo halıȝe lap on unum ꝺaȝum ne accolıȝe oꝺꝺe æꝺeopıȝe. ꝛꝓa ꝛꝓa hıꝛ pæꝛ ȝeꝺon on Ängelcỳnne oꝺ ꝺ Dunꝛꝛan apcebıꝛcop ⁊ Æꝺelpolꝺ bıꝛcop eꝛꝛ ꝺa lape on munclỳꝛum apæꝺon.—Ælf. in prol. ad Gram. apud Spel. vol. i. p. 618.

tongue.[1] From his school at Winchester, masters were distributed to the different monasteries; and the reputation of their disciples reflected a lustre on their talents and industry. In times of ignorance, indeed, no great portion of knowledge is required to excite admiration; but we should judge of the merit of men by comparing them with their contemporaries, not with those who have lived in happier times. Even among the Anglo-Saxon scholars of this period, there were some who merited no vulgar praise, especially Bridferth, the monk of Ramsey, and Ælfric, the disciple of Ethelwold. Bridferth is known to us only by his commentaries on the scientific treatises originally written by Beda; but commentaries that display an extent of reading, and accuracy of calculation, which would have done honour to any age before the birth of our present philosophy.[2] Of Ælfric some interesting particulars may be gleaned from his works; for, though the history of his life is involved in obscurity, he has been careful to inform us of the motives which induced him to write, and of the plan which he pursued in his writings.

We are first introduced to him at Winchester, where he appears to have studied under the bishop, St. Ethelwold. From Winchester he was sent by Elphege, the successor of Ethelwold, to Cerne, in Dorsetshire, a

[1] Dulce erat ei adolescentes et juvenes semper docere, et Latinos libros Anglice eis solvere, et regulas grammaticæ artis et metricæ rationis tradere; unde factum est ut perplures ex discipulis ejus fierent sacerdotes, atque abbates, et honorabiles episcopi, quidam etiam archiepiscopi in gente Anglorum.—Wolst. Vit. S. Ethel. p. 617.

[2] Leland speaks of this work of Bridferth in terms of the highest admiration:—Hunc ego librum, veluti avidus helluo, totum profecto devoravi.—(Lel. de Scrip. Brit. p. 171.) It is printed with Beda's philosophical works in the Basle edition, tom. ii.

monastery lately founded by the ealdorman Ethelmere. What office he occupied at Cerne is unknown; he was already in priest's orders, and employed his leisure hours in English composition.[1] Some of his books were devoted to the use of schools, as his English grammar of the Latin tongue, his glossary of Latin words employed in conversation, and his interlineary version of a Latin colloquy to be learned by beginners.[2] His other works are of a much higher order. It occurred to him to write two sets of English sermons for the use of parish priests in their addresses from the pulpit. For this he assigns two motives. 1st. There were in circulation many English books abounding with error, and therefore deceiving those who had not sufficient learning to distinguish between truth and falsehood.[3] 2nd. The days of Antichrist were approaching, in which the faith of Christians would be tested by wiles and persecution; whence it became a duty to prepare them for the trial by a course of sound instruction.[4] This he had attempted, not through any overweening opinion of his own ability,—for he knew many men much more able than himself,—but because he trusted that the suggestion came to him from God, who manifests his wonders through whomsoever he wills. He sends the volume, containing forty homilies, a sufficient

[1] I use the epithet English in place of Anglo-Saxon, because it is constantly used by Ælfric.

[2] These books were written after his sermons—ꝑẏþþan ıc ꝺa bec apenꝺe on hunꝺ eahꝺaꝛıgum ꝑpellum.—Pref. to his Grammar.

[3] "Because I have seen and heard of much error in *many* English books, which unlearned men in their simplicity have esteemed great wisdom."—(Ælf. Homil. by Thorpe, i. p. 2.) He excepts the works of Alfred from this censure. There must then have been *many* writers in English, of whom we have never heard.

[4] Ibid. pp. 2—6.

course for one year, to Archbishop Sigeric, submitting it to him for correction; that its value might hereafter depend on the authority of the primate, and not on the character of so contemptible a personage as himself.[1]

These homilies are not original compositions, Ælfric himself disclaims all pretension to such merit. His plan was to select passages from Catholic writers, to work them up into one whole, and to present them to the reader in easy and intelligible language, sometimes translating them closely word for word, sometimes more loosely sense for sense, with such omissions and abbreviations as he thought fit.[2] As far as manner and language are concerned, it must be confessed that he has performed his task admirably; but he shows very little judgment in his selection of legendary matter, and displays throughout an undue partiality for the typical method of scriptural interpretation. There is not an action, an event, a name mentioned in the sacred writings, which does not, in his opinion, teem with mystery. It may have a literal, but it has also a "ghostly," a spiritual signification: it expresses one thing, but it also "betokeneth" another.

[1] Precor modo, obnixe almitatem tuam, mitissime Pater Sigerice, ut digneris corrigere per industriam tuam, si aliquos nævos malignæ heresis, aut nebulosæ fallaciæ in nostra interpretatione reperies, et adscribatur dehinc hic codicillus tuæ auctoritati, et non utilitati nostræ despicabilis personæ.—Ælf. Homil. p. 3.

[2] Ibid. p. 1. The authors whom he translates, are St. Augustine, Jerome, Beda, Gregory, Smaragdus, and occasionally Haymo. Smaragdus was abbot of St. Michael's-on-the-Meuse, and compiled a book of homilies on the gospels and epistles for the whole year, out of the works of the fathers. Haymo was a monk of Fulda, and died bishop of Halberstadt. He left also a collection of homilies on the gospels for the Sundays, and on the saints. Both lived in the first half of the ninth century.—Trithem. No. cclvii. ccc.; Cave, i. 508, 530.

The applause with which this volume was received encouraged the homilist to complete a second, containing an equal number of sermons.[1] It is compiled on the same plan as the former, but the selections are made from a greater number of authors, and offer a larger portion of legendary lore. That, however, which has given to it a greater interest at the present day, is the celebrated homily for the festival of Easter, in which Ælfric states that the Eucharist is, by the power of God's word, truly the body and blood of Christ, not however after a bodily, but after a ghostly manner.[2] Whatever may have been the precise meaning which he attached to this distinction, one thing is certain, that the language in which he expressed himself was novel, and borrowed from Bertram, a foreign writer. Nothing like it is to be met with in any Anglo-Saxon writer who lived either before or after Ælfric.[3]

The avidity with which the homilies were read, induced the friends of Ælfric to solicit from him an additional series on the lives of the saints, whose days, though not kept with the solemnity of festivals, were still enrolled in the calendar. He complied.[4] But his friend Ethelwærd was not satisfied: he possessed an imperfect copy of an English version of Genesis, and

[1] It was sent, like the former, to the archbishop. Hoc quoque opus commendamus tuæ auctoritati corrigendum quemadmodum præcedens, precantes obnixe, ne parcas obliterare, si aliquas malignæ heresis maculas in eo reperies.—Wanley's MSS. p. 153.

[2] Hit ys æfter mihte Godcundes powdes sothlice Cristes lichama and his blod, no sua þeah lichamlice ac gastlice.—Homily at end of the Letter on the Testaments, p. 6.

[3] I make this remark, because it has become a custom to represent the language of Ælfric on the Eucharist, not as peculiar to himself, but as the constant doctrine of the Anglo-Saxon church. See note (R).

[4] In MS. Cott. Jul. E. vii.

entreated Ælfric to make for him a new translation of the part which had been lost, that is, from the beginning to the birth of Isaac.[1] The ealdorman was a benefactor whom he could not refuse; but he approached the task with misgiving and reluctance. He saw reason to fear that it might be productive of more mischief than benefit; that his illiterate countrymen might attach themselves to the simple narrative rather than to the ghostly meaning; and that when they should read of polygamy, of intermarriages among near relatives, and of other anti-Christian practices in the time of the patriarchs, might argue that what was lawful then, could not be unlawful now. He was therefore careful at the very outset to point out the difference of circumstances, when the world was in its infancy, and when it was growing old; and the difference of the Testaments, one of which is a record of types, to be understood after a ghostly manner, and the other a record of realities, to be observed according both to the spirit and the letter.[2] But he soon invented a plan which relieved him from his anxiety. He resolved to omit every chapter, or portion of a chapter, which he deemed either liable to erroneous interpretation, or of little importance to his Christian readers; and, where that could not be done conveniently, to render the passage harmless by the interpolation of an explanatory note, or the substitution of other words in place of the original text. Following this plan, translating,

[1] Heptateuch, by Thwaites, p. 1. This incidental notice is another proof that the Anglo-Saxons were not so unprovided with books in their native tongue as is generally supposed.

[2] Ibid. pp. 1, 2.

as he terms it, "shortly after his guise," he travelled easily, not only through the book of Genesis, but also through the four other books of Moses, and the book of Joshua; and closed his labours with the death of Sampson in the Book of Judges.[1] But he had hardly laid the pen down when he was induced to take it up again. It was the reign of Ethelred: the Danes had resumed their habits of predatory invasion, and the natives in despair sought to purchase with money the forbearance of their enemies. In these circumstances it occurred to Ælfric—so it would appear from the language of his letter to Sigwerd[2]—that a selection of examples from Holy Writ might serve to revive the courage of his countrymen, and to show that, if by prayer and repentance they would appease the anger of God, they might reasonably expect from him the victory over their heathen invaders. With this view he translated several appropriate portions of the books of Kings, and books of Esther and Judith, with the two books of the Maccabees: of that of Judith he says, "I have set this book in English after my manner, for an example to you men, that ye may defend with arms your country against the opposing host."[3] And with respect to the books of the Maccabees, he remarks that the valiant sons of Mattathias did not fight the foe with brave words

[1] Heptateuch, pp. 161, 163. To this the editor has appended a very short abridgment of the Book of Job, so short, indeed, that the forty chapters in the original, occupied by the speeches of Job and his friends, are compressed within the compass of a single page. It is probably the same which Ælfric acknowledges, when he says of the Book of Job: Be þam ic aþenðe on Engliſc ſumne cyðe iu.—(De Vet. Test. p. 21.) It occurs also among his homilies.

[2] Ælfric de Vet. Test. by L'Isle, 1623.

[3] Ibid. p. 22.

only; but that they took a better course—they humbled themselves before God, and prayed, *Give us, O Lord, aid in our distress, for vain is the help of man.* God heard them; and they overthrew the foe. This was under the law of Moses. Let Christians do as much, and they would be equally victorious. The victories of the brave Maccabeus had been recorded in the Bible to the honour of God: he, Ælfric, had translated them into English, that whoever would, might read them, and not only read, but also profit by them.[1]

It was shortly after this that he wrote his epistle to his friend Sigwerd, of East Heolen, on the Old and the New Testaments. His object was to furnish mere English scholars with some notion of the Holy Scripture, by describing the books of which it is composed, according to their several names and their respective contents. His canon of the Old Testament comprises all the books of the canon which was afterwards published by the Council of Trent;[2] but, in detailing the contents of the several books, he occasionally betrays a sad deficiency in those acquirements which are requisite for a biblical scholar. Of the Hebrew language he was entirely ignorant, for he tells us that the Book of Kings is so called from Malachim, the name of the author. Nor does he appear to have been much better

[1] Ælfric de Vet. Test. pp. 22, 23.

[2] According to Mr. Soames, Ælfric says that the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus "are not entitled to be read in the church but from long custom and their general goodness of matter."—(Bampton Lectures, p. 103.) How such a meaning can be extracted out of the words of Ælfric, is a mystery; for he merely says, in allusion to the many lessons taken out of them, and read in the choral service, that "they are read in the church to great profit, and very frequently" (p. 17)—man hiġ pæt on cipcan to micclum prðome ꝑrðe ge punelice.

read in Oriental geography, for in his pages the whale bears the prophet Jonas through the sea to the very city of Nineveh.[1] In his account of the New Testament, after the gospels—"the four streams from the one well-spring that irrigateth the church of God,"—he places the epistles in order according to the rank of the writers. First come the epistles of St. Peter, then those of James, John, and Jude, followed by fifteen epistles of St. Paul, which number he makes up by the addition of the aprocryphal Epistle to the Laodiceans.[2] The Acts of the Apostles is the next book, and the Apocalypse of St. John the last. The conclusion of the letter, though it has no relation to the subject, is worth translating, because it shows that the habit of drunkenness was still the besetting sin of the Anglo-Saxons. "When I was with thee, thou wouldst fain have persuaded me to drink for pleasure more than was my custom. But know, beloved, that he who forceth another to drink more than he can bear, shall answer for both if any harm come thereof. Our Saviour Christ, in his holy gospel, hath forbidden drunkenness to all who believe in him. Suffer, then, every man that will to observe the ordinance of Christ. And the holy teachers since the Saviour have also proscribed this evil habit by their doctrine, and have taught that men should drink so as to do no injury to themselves; for drunkenness assuredly destroyeth both a man's soul and his health."[3]

This treatise on the two Testaments was an original composition, as were also two episcopal charges which

[1] De Vet. Test. pp. 13, 20. [2] Ibid. p. 28.
[3] Ibid. p. 43.

he wrote, one for the use of Wulfsine, bishop of Sherborne, and one for that of Wulstan, archbishop of York. Of both, the subject is nearly the same—the observance of chastity on the part of the parish-priest, and the many duties connected with his office.[1] Ælfric was abbot at the time when he composed the last of these charges, but of what monastery is very uncertain. Generally it has been supposed that he was subsequently raised to one of the archiepiscopal sees;[2] but, after a long investigation I may be allowed to say, that I can find no evidence to identify Ælfric the homilist either with Ælfric archbishop of Canterbury, in 996, or with Ælfric archbishop of York, in 1002.[3] The last of his works was a treatise against the marriages of priests. In his visits to Sigwerd, he learned that there resided on the estate of that nobleman a hermit of great reputation, who warmly defended the cause of the married clergy. It was not to be expected that Ælfric, educated in the school of St. Ethelwold, would allow him to remain unanswered. He composed a treatise on the subject, which he sent to Sigwerd, and which he afterwards altered into the form of a homily to be read in the church.[4] It has not yet been published, but from the other writings of Ælfric we may easily collect the arguments which he employs.[5]

From the council of Calne till the Norman conquest,

[1] See them in Thorpe, ii. 342, 364. There is internal evidence that these treatises were written by Ælfric, and not by his namesake Ælfric Bata, as is maintained by Mores (p. 65).

[2] To York (Wharton, Dissert. de Duobus Ælf., Ang. Sac. i. 125); to Canterbury (Mores de Ælf. p. 55).

[3] See note (R).

[4] Cotton, MSS. Faust. A. 9.; More's Com. p. 45; Wanley, MSS. p. 199.

[5] See chap. xii. p. 256.

during a period of about ninety years, the Anglo-Saxon church presents few objects worthy the attention of the historian. The horrors which had marked the greater part of the ninth century were renewed. The assassination of the young King Edward, the indolence and pusillanimity of Ethelred, and the treachery of the Saxon nobles, invited Swegen, of Denmark, to retrace the bloody footsteps of his fathers; his immature death did not arrest the victorious career of his followers; and his son and successor, Canute, refused to sheathe the sword till he had mounted the throne of England. From the other scenes of pillage, massacre, and conflagration which, as was usual, marked the progress of the invaders, I may be allowed to call the attention of the reader to the calamitous fate of Canterbury.[1] The citizens, impelled by repeated injuries, had killed the brother of Edric, a name infamous in the annals of domestic treason. The policy or justice of Ethelred refused to punish the murderers; and Edric, in the pursuit of revenge, joined the enemies of his country, and led them to the devoted city. As the army of the barbarians approached, the citizens surrounded Elphege, their archbishop, and entreated him to provide for his security by a timely retreat. "It is the duty of the shepherd to watch by his flock," was his intrepid reply. On the twentieth day of the siege, the traitor Ælmer set fire to a quarter of the city; the garrison deserted the walls to save their wives and children; and the Danes, snatching the favourable moment, forced their way through the nearest gate. With tears of anguish and indignation, the Anglo-Saxon writers describe the

[1] Anno 1011.

miseries which the barbarians inflicted on this devoted city. Other cruelties may be supplied by the imagination of the reader; but it was their amusement—their own writers attest it [1]—to toss the infants of their captives on the points of their spears, or to crush them beneath the wheels of their waggons.[2] The archbishop, solicitous for his flock, and forgetful of his own danger, tore himself from the hands and entreaties of his monks, and, rushing into the midst of the carnage, besought the barbarians to spare his defenceless countrymen. His voice and gestures attracted their notice. He was seized, bound as a captive, and dragged to behold the ruin of his cathedral. Within this venerable church were collected the monks, the clergy, and a crowd of inhabitants. The sanctity of the place might, perhaps, arrest the fury of the Danes; or its strength might protract their fate till the enemy should listen to the suggestions of humanity. These hopes were fallacious. A pile of dry wood was raised against the wall; with shouts of joy the fire was kindled; the flames ascended the roof; and the falling timbers and melting lead compelled the fugitives to abandon their asylum. As they came forth they were massacred before the eyes of the archbishop.

Towards the evening, Elphege was conducted by his guards to the northern gate, the rendezvous of those whom the victors had destined to be sold or ransomed. The sight of their archbishop renewed the sorrows of the captives; and a general exclamation announced

[1] Bartholin, p. 457.
[2] Osb. Vit. S. Elpheg. p. 135; Wigorn, p. 614, anno 1011; Hoved. f. 247, anno 1011.

their anguish. He attempted to speak; but a stroke from a battle-axe compelled him to be silent. The Danes numbered the captives. They amounted to eight hundred. Seven thousand men, besides women and children, had perished in the sack of the city. Of forty monks, four only remained.

The life of the archbishop had been spared by the avarice of the Danes; and the price of his ransom was fixed at three thousand pounds of silver. Had he called upon the neighbouring clergy to give up their sacred ornaments, the sum might probably have been raised; but to the urgent requisitions of the barbarians he answered, that the life of a decrepit old man was of little value; and the obstinacy of his refusal increased the severity of his treatment. Seven months he was confined in prison, or compelled to follow their camp; and on the vigil of Easter was informed, that within eight days he must either pay the money, or forfeit his life. On the following Saturday he was conducted before the army. "Bishop," exclaimed a thousand voices, "where is your ransom?" The old man, to recover from his fatigue, sat down in silence. After a short pause he arose:—"I have no other gold or silver," said he, "to offer to you than the knowledge of the true God. Him it is my duty to preach; and if you are deaf to my voice, you will experience the effects of his justice." He could proceed no further. Rushing from their seats, the Danish chieftains beat him to the ground; the multitude copied the fury of their leaders; and in a few minutes the body of the archbishop was buried under a heap of stones.[1] At the close of the

[1] Osbern, p. 140. Hoveden, Florence of Worcester, and the Saxon

tragedy, Thrum, a Dane, whom he had baptized and confirmed on the preceding day, ventured to approach. He found him still breathing; and, to put an end to his pain, clove his skull with a battle-axe. The body was conveyed the next morning to London, and interred by the bishops Eadnoth and Ælfhune, in the church of St. Paul.[1]

During this turbulent and calamitous period, the vigilance of the bishops was employed to prevent the decline of ecclesiastical discipline; and the regulations which they published in the national synods would have done honour to the most fervent era of their church. Though numbers of the Northmen had returned laden with plunder to Denmark, many still remained in England under the protection of King Canute, and were gradually incorporated with the Saxon population. They adopted of course the religion of the people, but were in general little better than Christians in name, retaining a strong partiality for the superstitious rites of their native country. Hence, to suppress the relics of paganism among the new Christians, and to prevent its diffusion among the old, became an object of solicitude to the bishops: they invoked the aid of the secular power; and Canute readily lent the sanction of his authority to the enactment of severe laws against every species of idolatrous

Chronicle add "bones, and the skulls of oxen." The Danish warriors had just dined, and were intoxicated with mead or wine.—(Chron. Sax. p. 142; Hoved. f. 247; Floren. Wig. p. 614.) The archbishop was killed at Greenwich.—Ang. Sac. tom. i. p. 5; Thorn, p. 1781.

[1] These particulars are related by the contemporary writer in the Saxon Chronicle (ibid.), and by Osbern, who received them from the mouths of Alfward and Godric, the former a disciple of St. Dunstan, the latter of St. Elphege.—Osbern, p. 145.

worship, and the practice of witchcraft and necromancy. The former regulations respecting all classes of men, were also republished under his name. To the laity were recommended the duty of daily prayer, frequency of communion, the observance of festivals and fasts, the payment of church dues, the sanctity of marriage, and the abhorrence of pagan ceremonies. They were particularly reminded that to sell a Christian slave among foreigners was a most heinous crime, on account of the danger to which the soul of the unfortunate man would be exposed. The ancient canons were also renewed, detailing and enforcing the numerous duties of the parochial clergy; and it was again declared that the practice of chastity was of indispensable obligation to canons, priests, deacons, monks, and nuns. All who had taken the monastic vow were ordered to reside within their convents, and adhere to the exact observance of their rule; and the discipline which had formerly distinguished the canons was accurately described, and at times severely enforced. They were commanded to serve the Lord in chastity; to attend in the choir at the seven hours of the divine service; to eat daily in the common refectory; and to sleep each night in their own dormitory. If in any churches these practices had been omitted, they were to be resumed; and the incorrigible members were to be expelled, in favour of others more willing to comply with the duties of their profession.[1]

The rivalry which the reformation of St. Dunstan had excited between the clergy and the monks, was

[1] See the Dooms of Canute, in Thorpe, i. 359—424.

still, however, kept alive by occasional occurrences; and the fortunes of each party varied with the power or the fancy of its protectors. It has been noticed already, that Ælfric, the primate, established in the cathedral of Canterbury a colony of Benedictines, to whom possession was confirmed by a charter of King Ethelbert;[1] in place of the clergy who served the church of St. Edmund's, Canute substituted a confraternity of monks;[2] Leofric, earl of Coventry, built and endowed several monasteries; and the magnificent remains of the abbey of Westminster still proclaim the munificence of Edward the Confessor. On the other hand, churches were frequently transferred by the partiality of their patrons from the Benedictines to the clergy;[3] the massacres of the Danes compelled the monks of Canterbury to solicit the assistance of the canons; several abbeys were reduced by the barbarians to the lowest degree of poverty; and some, with their inhabitants, were committed to the flames.[4] The Norman invasion terminated these disputes: the petty

[1] Wilk. pp. 282, 284; Mores, Comment. pp. 84, 88.

[2] The body of St. Edmund was translated from Hoxton to Bury, and a monastery of canons erected over it in the reign of Canute.—Lel. Itiner. vol. ix. p. 5; Monast. Ang. tom. i. p. 285.

[3] See the council of Æuham (p. 292)—Si autem cujuspiam monachorum monasterium, velut plerumque mutata temporum vicissitudine contingere solet, cum canonicis constitutum sit.—In this case the ejected monk was to appear before his bishop, and promise to observe chastity, wear the monastic habit, and persevere in his profession till death. The last instance of the kind which I can find is that of Leofric, bishop of Crediton, who translated his see to Exeter, ejected the monks, and introduced a society of canons that followed the rule of St. Chrodogand of Metz. *Qui contra morem Anglorum*, ad formam Lotharingiorum, uno triclinio comederent, uno cubiculo cubitarent.—(Malm. l. ii. f. 145.) By *mos Anglorum*, he must understand the practice of the secularized canons.

[4] Ingulf, f. 506, 507.

jealousies of party were absorbed in the general confusion; and both monks and clergy, instead of contending against each other, were eager to unite their influence, in order to preserve their respective property from the rapacious gripe of the conquerors.

CHAPTER XIV.

FOREIGN MISSIONS.

MISSIONS OF THE ANGLO-SAXONS—OF ST. WILLIBRORD—OF THE TWO EWALDS—OF ST. BONIFACE—HIS LABOURS AMONG THE GERMANS—AMONG THE FRANKS—HE IS MADE ARCHBISHOP OF MENTZ—CONVERSION OF THE SWEDES—OF THE DANES—OF THE NORWEGIANS.

In the preceding pages I have endeavoured to convey to the mind of the reader a satisfactory notion of the discipline, polity, and principal revolutions of the Anglo-Saxon church; in the present chapter I shall attempt to describe the spiritual conquests of her children in the conversion of foreign and idolatrous nations. Scarcely had Christianity assumed a decided superiority in England, when many of the converts felt themselves animated with the spirit of apostles. The north of Germany, inhabited by kindred tribes of barbarians, presented an ample field to their exertions; the merit of rescuing their brethren from the dominion of paganism inflamed their zeal; and they eagerly devoted to the pious enterprise their abilities, fortunes, and lives. The success of their labours was answerable to the purity of their motives; and within little more than a century from the mission of St. Augustine, the rays of the gospel were reverberated from the shores of Britain to the banks of the Weser, the Rhine, and the Danube.

The first of the Anglo-Saxons who preached on the Continent was the celebrated St. Wilfrid. When the

injustice of his enemies compelled him to abandon his native country, he prudently avoided the hostile ports of Gaul, and landed on the more friendly coast of Friesland. Adelgise, the king, received the stranger with kindness, and gave to him his hand as a pledge of his protection. Prevented from prosecuting his journey by the early inclemency of the winter, and encouraged by the friendship of the king, Wilfrid announced the truths of the gospel to the Friesians; and several chieftains, with some thousands of their retainers, received from his hands the sacrament of baptism. When Ebroin,—he was mayor of the palace to the king of Neustria and Burgundy, and the personal enemy of Wilfrid,[1]— learned the bishop's arrival in Friesland, he despatched a messenger to demand the fugitive, and promised the king a sack of gold, as the reward of his perfidy. The Friesian received the proposal with indignation. In the presence of his chieftains, the Anglo-Saxon, and the ambassador, he listened to the letter of Ebroin; and then taking and tearing it in pieces, exclaimed: "So may the Creator divide the kingdom of that prince who perjures himself to God, and violates his promise to man." Wilfrid remained in safety under the protection of Adelgise; and, with the return of spring, resumed his journey.[2]

[1] Dagobert, the lawful heir to the crown of Austrasia, had in his youth been compelled to seek an asylum in Ireland. After an interval of some years his friends determined to place him on the throne. At their request Wilfrid discovered the royal exile, and assisted him, probably with money, to return and regain possession of his kingdom. —(Edd. Vit. Wilf. c. 27.) As Ebroin was the great adversary of Dagobert, he was naturally the enemy of Wilfrid; and at the solicitation of the king of Northumbria had undertaken to arrest him on his way to Rome.—Edd. c. 24.

[2] Edd. c. 25, 26. Ann. 675, 676.

The preaching of Wilfrid may be ascribed to accident rather than design; and the merit of establishing the missions in Germany must be allotted to Ecgbert, a Northumbrian priest of noble extraction. The monasteries of Ireland and the Western Isles were filled, at this period, with men whose well-earned reputation was acknowledged by the other Christian nations of Europe. The praise of their virtue and learning had been the favourite theme of Aidan, Finan, and Colman, the first bishops of Lindisfarne: the approbation of these prelates awakened the curiosity of their disciples; and the desire of improvement induced a crowd of noble youths to cross the sea, and attend the lessons of these foreign masters. In Ireland the hospitality of the natives gained the affection of the strangers; and the advantages which they enjoyed attached them to their voluntary exile.[1] Of this number was Ecgbert. His application was unwearied; in the course of a few years he saw himself surrounded with disciples; and his reputation drew to his school many of his countrymen. It was then he formed the design of diffusing the light of the gospel through the north of Germany, and selected for his associates the most learned and zealous of his hearers. But the loss of the ship destined to transport the missionaries retarded his departure; and a dream, or the advice of his friends, suggested an improvement of the original plan. The personal

[1] Bed. Hist. l. iii. c. 27. Ecgbert's reputation was derived from his exemplo vivendi, et *instantia* docendi.—(Bed. iii. 4.) He was doctor suavissimus (v. 22). Alcuin says of him and of Wigbert,—Quorum uterque ob cœlestis patriæ amorem domo, patria, cognatione relicta, Hiberniam secessit, ibique dulcissimos supernæ contemplationis fructus, sæculo nudus, Deo plenus, solitaria quotidie hauriebat conversatione.—Vit. S. Willib. Oper. ii. p. 185.

exertions of Ecgbert were confined to the inhabitants of the Western Islands; and the foreign missions were allotted to the zeal of his more robust disciples. As their precursor, Wigbert was sent to Friesland, to sound the dispositions of the natives. Two years of fruitless labour exhausted his patience, and he returned to relate a lamentable tale of the indocility of Radbode, the successor of Adelgise, and of the ferocity of his subjects.[1] But Wigbert had scarcely reached Ireland, when the Franks, under the conduct of Pepin of Heristal, wrested from the Friesian prince the southern part of his dominions. The news revived the hopes of Ecgbert. Pepin of Heristal was a Christian: his authority would second the exertions of the missionaries; and twelve Anglo-Saxons, with Willibrord at their head, sailed, in 690, from the coast of Ireland to the mouth of the Rhine.[2]

Willibrord was a native of Northumbria. His education had been intrusted to the care of the monks of Ripon; and in that seminary he received the clerical tonsure and the monastic habit. But the fame of Ecgbert excited the emulation of the young monk; and his thirst after knowledge could not be satisfied with the instructions of an inferior master. At the age of twenty he sailed, with the permission of his abbot, to the eastern coast of Ireland. Ecgbert was charmed with the modesty, application, and virtue of his disciple, and hesitated not to appoint him, when he had scarcely attained his thirty-second year, the superior of the mission in Friesland. With his companions he

[1] Ibid. l. v. c. 9.

[2] Anno 690. Bed. l. v. c. 10.

arrived at Utrecht, was suffered to traverse without molestation the territory of Radbode; and having reached the south of Friesia, which had lately been subjugated by the Franks, solicited and obtained the protection of Pepin. Leaving the other missionaries there, he hastened, in 692, to Rome, to obtain the permission of Pope Sergius, with his blessing on their labours, and a supply of relics for the foundation of churches.[1] On his return he resumed his missionary office, and so gratified was Pepin with his zeal and success, that four years later he sent the Anglo-Saxon to Rome a second time, where he was ordained bishop under the name of Clemens, by Pope Sergius, received from him the pallium, and was appointed metropolitan of Friesland.[2]

Not content with labouring among the subjects of Pepin, the new archbishop ventured to preach to the independent Friesians; nor was he opposed by Radbode, who either respected his virtues, or feared the resentment of the Franks. The territories of Ongend, a ferocious Dane, were next visited by the intrepid missionary; but the terror of their chieftain rendered the natives deaf to his instructions, and he contented himself with the purchase of thirty boys, whom he designed to educate as the future apostles of their country. On his return, near the mouth of the Elbe, in the isle of Fositesland, his zeal was nearly rewarded with the crown of martyrdom. There, in a spring, which superstition had consecrated to the service of

[1] Ut cum ejus licentia et benedictione desideratum evangelizandi gentibus opus iniret.—Bed. Hist. l. v. c. 11.

[2] Bed. ibid. Oper. Min. p. 200. Epist. S. Bonif. p. 132. Alc. ii. p. 186.

Fosite, a pagan deity, he had presumed to baptize three of his converts. The profanation alarmed the fanaticism of the idolaters; and the permission of Radbode was asked to immolate the missionaries to the god whose fountain they had polluted. By the order of the king the lots were cast. Willibrord escaped; but one of his companions was sacrificed. The missionary himself was at last sent back with an honourable escort to Pepin.[1]

Eventually the chance of war placed the whole of Friesland under the dominion of the Franks. Willibrord now pursued his missionary conquests without opposition. He consecrated bishops for the more distant parts of the country, established several churches and convents, both of men and women, and received for his archiepiscopal seat the castle of Utrecht, from Charles Martel, whom he had formerly baptized. He died at Epternach, near Triers, in his eighty-second year, after having spent fifty years in his missionary labours.[2]

Among the disciples of Ecgbert were also two brothers, Anglo-Saxons, of the name of Ewald, but distinguished, from the colour of their hair, by the surnames of the Swart and the White. The success of Willibrord had kindled a similar ardour in their

[1] Alc. ii. p. 187. Act. SS. Bened. sæc. iii. tom. i. p. 601.

[2] By Beda we are told that Utrecht was given to Willibrord by Pepin (Hist. v. 11), and Pepin's victory over Radbode in the preceding year might have placed him in possession of that castle. But Alcuin, who was well acquainted with Beda's writings, and also with the history of Pepin, and the family of Pepin, says that the present was made to Willibrord by Charles Martel (Alc. Oper. ii. 188): and it was certainly by Charles that Friesia was completely subjugated, a little before the time when Beda wrote.

breasts. With the permission and the blessing of their teacher they sailed to Friesia; and then directed their steps to a new field, the territory of the Old-Saxons. At the first village they were kindly received by the reeve, and entertained by him hospitably, while at their request he despatched to the ealdorman an account of their arrival.[1] Secure, as they thought, in his house, they spent their time in prayer and psalmody, "offering daily to God the sacrifice of the saving Victim; for which purpose they had brought with them the sacred vessels and a portable altar."[2] The singularity of their conduct provoked suspicion; they were evidently engaged in some foreign worship, and might, if suffered to proceed, seduce the ealdorman from the religion of his fathers; and the natives, under the influence of jealousy and fanaticism, seized the strangers, and put them to death on the third of October, 695. Ewald the Fair was despatched by a single blow; but his brother was reserved to gratify with the discerption of his members the cruelty of his persecutors. The outrage, however, did not pass unpunished. The ealdorman, deeming it an insult to his authority, put the murderers to the sword, and burnt the village. By Pepin the bodies of the missionaries were honoured

[1] Here Beda inserts an interesting notice respecting the polity of the Old-Saxons. Non enim habent reges iidem Antiqui Saxones, sed satrapas plurimos suæ genti præpositos, qui, ingruente belli articulo, mittunt æqualiter sortes, et, quemcumque sors ostenderit, hunc tempore belli ducem omnes sequuntur, huic obtemperant; peracto autem bello, rursus æqualis potentiæ omnes fiunt satrapæ.—Bed. l. v. c. 10.

[2] Quotidie sacrificium Deo victimæ salutaris offerebant, habentes secum vascula sacra, et tabulam altaris vice dedicatam.—(Bed. ibid.) Mr. Churton translates this a small communion-table (p. 153); it was a portable altar, consecrated by the bishop for the use of travellers. Communion-tables were unknown in those ages.

with a magnificent funeral at Cologne; by the Anglo-Saxon church their names were enrolled in the martyrology.[1]

Of the Anglo-Saxons, who associated themselves to the labours of Willibrord, several are mentioned in history with peculiar praise; and their memory was long revered with gratitude by the posterity of their converts. 1st. Swidbert was one of his first companions. The Boructuarii, the inhabitants of the present duchy of Berg and the county of Mark, were the principal objects of his zeal; but the fruits of his labours were interrupted and destroyed by a sudden irruption of the pagan Saxons. The country was laid waste; the natives, incapable of resistance, emigrated to the neighbouring nations; and the missionary, in his distress, was compelled to solicit the assistance of Pepin. That prince gave to him the island of Keisserswerdt, in the river Rhine, on which he built a monastery, and from which he occasionally made excursions, to instruct the remaining inhabitants.[2] 2nd. Adelbert, a prince of the royal race of Northumbria, abandoned his country to share the merit and fortunes of Willibrord. He chose the north of Holland for the exercise of his zeal; the pagans listened with docility to his instructions; and his memory was long held in veneration by the inhabitants of Egmond, the place of his residence and death.[3] 3rd. The Batavi, who dwelt in the island formed by the Rhine and the Wahal, owed their conversion to the

[1] Anno 692.—(Bed. l. v. c. 11.) In Beda's Martyrology the third of October is assigned to their memory.—Smith's Bede, p. 428.

[2] Bed. l. v. c. 12.

[3] Act. SS. Bened. sæc. iii. tom. i. p. 631.

instructions of Werenfrid. Elste was the capital of the mission; and the church of that town preserved his relics.[1] 4th. Wiro, Plechelm, and Otger, three Anglo-Saxons, devoted themselves to the conversion of the inhabitants of Gueldres. Pepin revered and rewarded their virtues, and successively intrusted to the two former the direction of his conscience. Their principal residence was in the vicinity of Ruremond.[2]

But the merit of converting barbarous nations was not confined to the zeal of the Northumbrian missionaries; and the title of Apostle of Germany has been bestowed by posterity on a West-Saxon of the name of Boniface. He was born at Crediton, in Devonshire, in 680, and at an early age discovered a strong predilection for the monastic profession. His father beheld with displeasure the inclination of his son; but a dangerous indisposition removed or subdued his objections; and the young Winfrith (such was his original name), accompanied by the friends of his family, was delivered, at the age of seven, to the abbot of the monastery of Exanceaster. From Exanceaster he was soon transferred to Nutscelle; and in both houses his rising virtues and abilities commanded the esteem and admiration of the brethren. After having acquired every species of knowledge which was valued at that period, he was advanced to the office of teacher; his school was frequented by a crowd of students; and to facilitate the diffusion of knowledge, he taught, by

[1] Act. SS. Bolland. Aug. 28.

[2] Soc. Bollan. Mai, tom. ii. p. 309; Jul. tom. iv. p. 58; Sep. tom. ii. p. 612. The Irish writers consider Wiro as their countryman; but on the authority of Alcuin I have called him an Anglo-Saxon.—Alc. de Pont. Ebor. v. 1045.

the command of his superiors, in the neighbouring monasteries and convents. About the age of thirty he was ordained priest; and the eloquence or piety of his sermons increased his former reputation. It chanced that the witan of Wessex sought to consult Berctwald, archbishop of Canterbury, respecting some point in litigation among certain powerful families. Winfrith was chosen to explain the matter to the prelate; and so satisfactory was the manner in which he discharged this office, that King Ine from that moment honoured him with his confidence, and called him to the great councils of the nation. The ambition of the monk, had he listened to ambition, might now have aspired to the highest ecclesiastical preferments. But he had heard of the spiritual conquests of Willibrord and the other missionaries; and their example had kindled in his breast a desire of contributing like them to the progress and diffusion of Christianity. The abbot Wibert reluctantly yielded to his entreaties; and Winfrith, accompanied by three of his brethren, sailed, in 716, from the port of London to the coast of Friesland. He could not have chosen a more inauspicious moment. Pepin of Heristal was dead; Charles, his son and successor, was opposed by the rival ambition of Ragenfrid; and Radbode seized the favourable opportunity to pour his barbarians into the provinces which he had been formerly compelled to cede to the power of the Franks. The missionaries fled; the churches were demolished; and paganism recovered the ascendency. Winfrith, however, penetrated as far as Utrecht; he even ventured to solicit the protection of Radbode; but his efforts were fruitless; and prudence induced him to

return to England, and expect the issue of the war in the retirement of his former monastery.[1]

But in England his humility was soon alarmed by the partiality of his brethren, who, on the death of the abbot Winbert, chose him for their superior. To elude their importunity, he implored the assistance of Daniel, bishop of Winchester; and by the influence of that prelate a new abbot was installed, and the missionary was again permitted to pursue his apostolic labours. With several companions he sailed to the Continent in 719, and directed his steps to Rome, carrying with him a letter from his diocesan. As soon as the pontiff learned from it the views and qualifications of the pilgrim, he applauded his zeal, pointed out Germany as the theatre of his future labours, and dismissed him with his advice and benediction. By Liutprand, king of Lombardy, he was received with veneration. From the court of that hospitable monarch he crossed the Alps, traversed the territory of the Bavarians, and entered the country of the Thuringii. In former times the gospel had been preached among them; but of the few who called themselves Christians most retained the habits of paganism, and employed the services of priests who were adventurers, ignorant of their duties, and irregular in their morals. For some months Boniface—he had now assumed a Latin name[2]—devoted himself to the

[1] S. Willib. Vit. S. Bonif. pp. 255—262, edit. Serar.; pp. 145—155, ed. Giles.

[2] It is generally said that the name of Boniface was given to him by the Pope, when he was ordained bishop. But he had assumed it long before. The very document by which Gregory II. in 719 commissioned him, "in the name of the indivisible Trinity, and by the authority of the blessed Peter, the prince of the apostles, whose office of teaching he held, and whose holy see he administered, to preach the gospel in

instruction of the people, and the reformation of their clergy: but was recalled from this pious work to the first object of his choice by the death of Radbode, and the subsequent successes of the Franks. Descending the Rhine, he entered Friesland, offered his services to Willibrord, and laboured three years under the direction of that apostolic prelate. The archbishop revered the virtues of his new associate, and determined to appoint him his successor in the see of Utrecht; but Boniface declined the dignity, retired with precipitation among the Hessians and the Old-Saxons, and built for his residence a monastery at Amanaburg, on the river Ohm. The poverty of the country, the inclemency of the weather, and the caprice of the barbarians, furnished a severe trial to the patience of the missionary; but his zeal and perseverance subdued every obstacle; and within a short time he saw himself surrounded by a numerous and fervent society of Christians.

Gregory was first informed of the spiritual conquests of Boniface by the report of travellers; the priest Binne soon arrived with letters from the missionary himself, detailing the history of his labours in Hesse, Saxony, and Thuringia. The pontiff received the information with joy, summoned the Anglo-Saxon to Rome, interrogated him personally respecting his future prospects and theological acquirements, and ordained him bishop on the feast of St. Andrew, in the year

any pagan country into which he might penetrate," is addressed to the religious *priest* Boniface; and a letter from his countrywoman Bugga, in the following year, is also addressed to the most worthy *priest* of God, Boniface, otherwise Winfrith.—Serarius ep. xxxv. cxviii. Giles, ep. ii. iii. pp. 26, 27.

723.[1] The new prelate left Rome for the past scene of his labours, taking with him a book of the canons, to aid him in the government of the mission, a synodal containing instructions for his personal conduct,[2] and a letter of recommendation to Charles Martel, the mayor of the palace. That prince received him with honour, took him under his protection, and dismissed him with a charter of Mundbyrd.[3] From that hour spiritual and secular distinctions began and continued to flow in upon him. He was regularly summoned to attend the national councils of the Franks; in 732 he received the pallium, with authority to establish episcopal sees; he was then honoured with the title of envoy of St. Peter and legate of the Apostolic See, and afterwards

[1] On the oath which he took at his ordination. See note (T).

[2] The synodal was so called, because it was read in the synod, or meeting, in which the new bishop was solemnly installed in his church. A copy of it is in the Liber Diurnus Romani Pontificis, p. 72. We find it in use as early as the time of Gelasius I., and for several centuries afterwards. That which Boniface received was addressed Populo et Clero Germaniæ (see it apud Serar. ep. cxxiv.; Giles, ep. x. p. 36), and is verbatim the same which is found in the Libur Diurnus, with the exception of the duty of keeping the three Rogation days, which had not been received in the Roman church in the time of Gregory II.

The rules in the synodal regard chiefly the times of administering baptism and orders, the qualifications of the ordinandi, and the income of the Church. With respect to the last, the quadripartite division among the bishop, the clergy, the poor, and the repairs of the buildings, is strongly inculcated.—5. De reditu ecclesiæ quatuor faciat portiones, quarum unam sibi ipsi retineat, alteram clericis, pro officiorum suorum sedulitate, distribuat, tertiam pauperibus et peregrinis. Quartam ecclesiasticis fabricis noverit reservandam, de quibus divino erit redditurus judicio rationem.—Inter Ep. S. Bon. ibid.

[3] In this document Charles styles himself illustris vir Carolus, major domus, and states that to the apostolic man and father in Christ, Boniface the bishop, fecimus manum nostram roboratam dare, ut ubicumque, ubi et ubi ambulare videtur, cum nostro amore, vel sub nostro mundeburdio et defensione quietus vel conservatus esse debeat; ea ratione ut justitiam reddat, et similiter justitiam recipiat. It bore his signature and seal.—Ep. S. Bonif. Serar. ep. xxxii. Giles, ep. xi. p. 37.

was appointed papal vicar over the Gallic, as well as the Germanic bishops. But here, that I may not fatigue the attention of the reader, I shall desert the chronological order of events, and notice separately the more important incidents in his history; 1st, as a missionary to infidel nations, and 2nd, as the representative of the Roman pontiff.

I.—1. The first care of the missionary, after he had received episcopal consecration, was to increase the number of his associates. In a circular letter addressed to the bishops and the principal abbots in England, he painted in lively colours the wants of the people, and exhorted his countrymen to assist him in liberating the souls of their fellow-creatures from the yoke of ignorance and paganism. His exhortations were read with congenial sentiments by the more fervent of the monks and clergy; the merit of converting the infidels, and the hope of obtaining the crown of martyrdom, taught them to despise the dangers and difficulties of the enterprise; and many zealous missionaries successively crossed the sea, and placed themselves at the disposal of the new apostle.[1] No motives but those of the purest zeal could have supported them under the numerous privations and dangers to which they were continually exposed. Bread they were able to obtain from the gratitude of their proselytes, and the menaces of the Franks protected them from the insults of the vanquished barbarians, who refused to listen to their doctrine; but for clothing and almost every other necessary, they were compelled to depend on the casual

[1] The chief were, according to Othlo (l. i. c. 25), Burchard, Lull, Willibald, Wunibald, Wintan, and Gregory.

benevolence of their distant friends; and the fruits of their labours were frequently destroyed, and their lives endangered, by the hostilities of the tribes that still retained the religion and independence of their fathers. By one incursion no less than thirty churches were levelled with the ground.[1]

2. The next object of the archbishop was to insure a permanent supply of clergymen. With this view he erected several monasteries, and exhorted his associates to copy his example in their different districts. His first foundation was the small cell at Ordorf; this was followed by the larger monasteries of Fritzlar and Amanaburg; and to them succeeded, in 744, the rich and magnificent abbey of Fulda. An extensive forest, known by the name of Buchow, lay in the midst of Franconia, Hesse, Wetteravia, and Thuringia. Through it ran the river Fuld, on the banks of which Boniface discovered a spot adapted, in his opinion, to the purposes of a monastic life. A grant of the place was readily obtained from the piety of Carloman, the son of Pepin: Sturm, his beloved disciple, with seven associates, cleared the wood, and erected the necessary buildings; and Boniface himself taught them the strict observance of the rule of St. Benedict. The abbey continued to flourish after the death of its founder, and within the space of a few years contained four hundred monks. Till its late secularization, its superior was a prince of the empire, and styled himself primate of all the abbots of Gaul and Germany.[2]

[1] S. Bonif. ep. xci. xcii. apud Ser.; ep. lxxviii. lxxix. apud Giles.

[2] Willib. Vit. Bonif. c. viii. Est locus silvaticus in eremo vastissimæ solitudinis in medio nationum prædicationis nostræ, in quo monasterium

For the education of the female sex, Boniface solicited the assistance of Tetta, the abbess of Wimborne; and Lioba, with several of the sisters, readily devoted themselves to so meritorious an attempt. To these he afterwards joined several other English ladies, who were animated with similar views, and equally desirous to partake in the merit of the missionaries. Lioba was placed in the convent of Bischofsheim, on the Tuber; Tecla, at Kitzingen, in Franconia; Walpurge, at Heidenheim, near the Brentz; and Chunihild and Chunitrude were sent, the former into Thuringia, the latter into Bavaria.[1]

As Boniface advanced in age, he found himself unequal to the administration of so extensive a diocese. With the permission of the pontiff, and the consent of Carloman, he established four episcopal sees, at Erfurt, Buraburg, Eichstadt, and Wurzburg; and intrusted them to the care of four of the most zealous among his associates, Adelhard, Wintan, Willibald, and Burchard.[2]

II.—1. It should be remarked that the light of the gospel had been carried to several of the Germanic tribes by the disciples of St. Columban, long before the arrival of the new apostle. But in many places there did not now exist a trace of their labours; and in others, where there appeared a faint show of Christianity, the missionaries were few, ignorant, and unconnected with each other, being for the greater

construentes monachos constituimus sub regula sancti Patris Benedicti viventes.—Ep. xiv. ed. Ser.; lxxv. ed. Giles.

[1] Othloni Vit. S. Bonif. apud Canis. Ant. Lect. tom. iii. Annal. Bened. tom. ii. p. 72.

[2] Ep. S. Bon. cxxxii. ed. Ser.; xlix. ed. Giles.

part, if we may believe Boniface himself, impostors, fugitive slaves, who had assumed the clerical name and garb, or adventurers from foreign countries, who sought nothing but their own emolument, alternately Christians and pagans, officiating as one or the other at the will or caprice of their patrons.[1] Boniface had formerly penetrated into Bavaria, when it was governed by the duke Hugobald, and had met with the most determined opposition from rivals of the above description; but on his return from his third visit to Rome in 738, while he was at the court of Liutprand, king of Lombardy, he received an invitation from the duke Odilo, and repaired a second time to that country. With the aid of the civil power, he was now triumphant; his adversaries were degraded from the offices which they had assumed; and, to accelerate and confirm the progress of the gospel, the country was divided into four dioceses. To Vivilo, a prelate previously commissioned by the Holy See, was assigned the bishopric of Passan; John, an Anglo-Saxon, was ordained for that of Saltzburg; and Goibald and Erembert were placed in the churches of Ratisbon and Friesingen.[2]

2. From the Bavarians, we pass to the Franks, whose history, after the division of the monarchy among the sons of Clotaire I., presents for more than a century an almost unbroken succession of treason, murder, and war. Among contending sovereigns and competitors, the chief offices in the church were treated as secular dignities; bishoprics and abbeys were bestowed as læns or benefices for life on laymen, or on clerks of

[1] Ep. Bonif. cxl. ed. Ser.; lxxi. ed. Giles.
[2] Vit. S. Bonif. auct. Willib. c. viii.

ambitious and disorderly conduct; and little attention was paid to the conduct of the inferior clergy, while the higher were employed in the secular pursuits of "hunting in the forest with dogs, hawks, and falcons;" leading their retainers to the field, and shedding in battle the blood of their opponents, whether Christians or pagans.[1] This, Boniface assures us, had been the state of the Church among the Franks for eighty years before his time, during which no synod had been held, no metropolitan authority had been acknowledged or exercised; nor could he even treat in person with the mayors of the palace concerning his own mission, without finding himself in the company of false, or schismatic, or excommunicated bishops and abbots.[2] Their society alarmed his conscience; he thought it a breach of the oath which he had taken at his ordination; but his scruples were removed by the answers of the pontiff and of Daniel, bishop of Winchester;[3] and the former soon afterwards appointed him apostolic vicar in Gaul, charging him at the same time with the task of reforming the church of the Franks. But what reform could *he* introduce, a foreign and friendless bishop, with no other than spiritual arms, against men

[1] Modo maxima ex parte per civitates episcopales sedes traditæ sunt laicis cupidis ad possidendum, vel adulteratis clericis, scortatoribus, publicanis, sæculariter ad perfruendum . . . . Sunt ebriosi, et injuriosi, vel venatores, et qui pugnant in exercitu armati, et effundunt propria manu sanguinem hominum, sive paganorum sive Christianorum.—Ep. Bonif. Zach. Papæ, ep. cxxxii. ed. Ser.; xlix. ed. Giles.

[2] Ser. ep. cxxxviii. cxlii. Giles, ep. lx. lxxvi. By false bishops and abbots, he meant laymen in possession of bishoprics and abbeys; by schismatics, those who had been ordained, or who continued to perform their offices, in defiance of canonical prohibitions; by excommunicated, those who had notoriously committed offences which the canons visited with excommunication.

[3] Ser. ep. iii. cxlii. Giles, ep. xii. xiii. lxxvi.

the most powerful in the state, and the most interested to oppose his endeavours? It was resolved to invoke the aid of the secular magistrate; and Zachary and Boniface made the proposal to Carloman and Pepin, the mayors of the palace, each of whom returned a most favourable answer. The attempt was begun in the dominions of Carloman, the most zealous of the two brothers, in a national council held in 742; in which that prince, having received the canons separately prepared by Boniface and the bishops, published them as laws to be observed throughout his dominions. The instrument states that he had appointed Boniface, the envoy of the Holy See, archbishop over the churches in his dominions; that a council of bishops should be held every year; that all the rights and possessions taken from the Church should be restored; that false priests, and adulterous or fornicating deacons and clerks, should be put out of their livings, and compelled to do penance; that no clergyman should wear arms, and that the bishop, with the aid of the greave or sheriff, should extirpate all heathenish superstitions.[1] But the provision for the restoration of the church property provoked so much clamour and opposition, that Carloman dared not carry it into execution, and the next year, in a council held at Leptines, near

[1] Apud Ser. p. 110; apud Giles, ii. p. 11. Zachary says of this council, that it was assembled, juxta nostram commonitionem, mediantibus filiis nostris Pipino et Carlomanno, principibus vestris, peragente etiam vicem nostram prædicto Benefacio . . . . . reverendissimo et sanctissimo fatre nostro.—(Apud Ser. ep. cxxxvii.; apud Giles, ep. xlviii.) With respect to the pagan superstitions, which appear to be the same as those among the Anglo-Saxons, see the enumeration in this council (Giles, ii. p. 13), and another of thirty articles in the next council, and their explanation.—Ibid. p. 16, and notes, p. 248.

Binch, in Hainalt, it was enacted, under the pretext of state necessity, that the present holders should retain possession for life, paying a yearly rent of twelve pennies for each cassata or folcland, which, at the demise of the holder should revert to the Church, unless the prince should deem it necessary to bestow it as a læn or benefice to some other person, who should hold it on the same condition.[1] It grieved Boniface that what he had gained in the first council had thus been pared away in the second; Zachary bade him, instead of grieving that he had accomplished so little, rejoice that he had accomplished so much.[2]

After this, the zeal of Pepin seemed to emulate that of Carloman. With his approbation, Boniface summoned, in 744, a council to meet at Soissons, in which three-and-twenty bishops confirmed the canons passed in the two former councils, with the exception of that which commanded the restoration of church property.[3] Such restoration was now abandoned as hopeless; but the archbishop continued to hold councils, and to re-enact under different shapes the same ecclesiastical laws, till a uniform system of church discipline was introduced among the churches of Gaul and Germany,[4]

[1] Apud Ser. p. 112; Giles, ii. p. 15. By Zachary, the cassata is called conjugium servorum.—(Ser. cxxxviii. Giles, lx.) In the acts of this council, we meet with the renunciation of the devil in the vernacular tongue, which shows how like it was to the Anglo-Saxon. Thus, Forsachis tu diobolæ—Forsakest thou the devil? Ec forsacho diobolæ—I forsake the devil. End allum diobol gelde—And all the devil's pomps? End ec forsacho allum diobol gælde—And I forsake all the devil's pomps. End allum dioboles wercum—And all the devil's works? End ec forsacho allum dioboles wercum, &c.—Giles, ii. p. 16.

[2] Ex hoc gratias ago Deo, quia et hoc potuisti impretrare.—Ser. ep. cxxxviii.; Giles, ep. lx.

[3] Giles, ii. p. 27.

[4] It was in one of these councils, held in 745 at Mentz, according to

In one of these, the church of Cologne, probably because it was vacant, was selected as an archiepiscopal see for Boniface; but in 748, in consequence of the deposition of the Bishop Gervilio, Mentz was substituted in the place of Cologne; and Zachary, at the prayer of the Franks, created it an archbishopric, subjecting to Boniface and his successors the cities of Tongres, Cologne, Worms, Spires, Utrecht, and all the German nations to which Boniface had carried the light of the gospel, that is, all the German churches, on either bank of the Rhine, from Utrecht in the north to the Rhætian Alps.[1]

About this time a most important revolution occurred in the empire of the Franks. The sceptre had long ago slipped from the feeble grasp of the Merovingian kings into the hands of Charles Martel and his sons. These princes at first contented themselves with the power,

Serarius,—in some other part of Germany according to Eckart,—that the canons were passed which Boniface sent to Archbishop Cuthbert. —(See vol. i. note G. p. 351.) The bishops of that council were Anglo-Saxon missionaries in Germany, under papal authority—de eadem gente Anglorum nati et nutriti, hic *per præceptum* apostolicæ sedis peregrinamur (Giles, ep. lxi.); a circumstance which accounts for the profession of obedience to the Apostolic See in the first canon.

[1] See for Cologne, Ser. ep. cxxxviii.; Giles, ep. lx.; for Mentz, Giles, ep. lxxii. p. 175. The following was the cause why Gervilio was deposed. Gerold, bishop of Mentz, had been killed in battle against the Saxons, and Carloman, to console Gervilio, the son of Gerold, and a lay officer in his court, gave to him the bishopric which had been held by his father. He was ordained, and, in the next expedition against the Saxons, requested by message a conference with the warrior who had killed Gerold. They met on horseback in a river which separated the armies; and Gervilio, watching his opportunity, traitorously ran the Saxon through the body. The battle instantly began; the Franks were victorious; and Gervilio returned to his bishopric. But in a council of the whole nation, Boniface objected to him, that by the canons no wilful homicide was permitted to exercise the episcopal office; and Gervilio was deposed, with the full consent of Carloman and his nobles.—See note in Giles, Oper. S. Bonif. ii. p. 266.

without the title of royalty; and on the calends of May the hereditary monarch of the Franks was annually exhibited to the veneration of his subjects. But Pepin, soon after the abdication of his brother Carloman, dismissed the dangerous pageant. Childeric, the last king of the race of Clovis, was shorn in the monastery of Sithiu:[1] and Boniface, if we may believe a host of ancient writers, crowned the mayor of the palace, according to the wish or the advice of Pope Zachary. No point of history is, perhaps, better attested than the share which the pontiff and his legate bore in this transaction;[2] yet several French critics have ventured to call it in question; and their scepticism may be excused or justified, from the silence of Zachary and Boniface in their correspondence, and of Anastasius and Willibald in their ancient biographies of Zachary and Boniface.

But whether Boniface took, or did not take, any part in that transaction, it is certain that, about the same time, the precarious state of his health rendered him unable to obey the summons to a national council,[3] and harassed his mind with apprehensions for the stability of the mission, and the lot of his countrymen, after his death. Under the impulse of these feelings he wrote the following letter to the priest Fulcrede, an influential personage in the French court:—"In the name of Christ I beseech you to bring to a good conclusion what you have begun so well; that is, to salute

[1] St. Bertin's, in the city of St. Omer.

[2] See Eginhard, Annales Laureshamenses, Loiselani, Fuldenses, Bertiniani, &c., apud Le Cointe, Annal. tom. iv.

[3] On his recovery on one occasion he offers to go to the council, if he king require it.—Ser. ep. civ. Giles, ep. lxxx.

in my name our glorious and gracious king Pepin, to thank him for those works of charity which he has done for me, and to inform him that, in my opinion and the opinion of my friends, these frequent infirmities of mine will quickly lead me to the grave. On which account I beg of his highness, in the name of Christ, the Son of God, to let me know while I live, in what manner he will deal with my disciples after my death: for they are, almost all of them, foreigners; some are priests established in distant places; others, monks employed in their different cells in the education of youth; and some of them old men, who have been for many years the companions and sharers of my labours. For all these I am most anxious that they should not be disturbed after my death, but should remain under the advice and protection of your highness,[1] that they may not be scattered like sheep without a shepherd; nor the people near the marches of the pagans, by losing them, lose also the law of Christ. Wherefore, in the name of Christ, I beg your clemency, if it be your good pleasure to appoint my son and fellow-bishop Lull to the ministry which I hold, as preacher and teacher of the priests and the people; and I trust that, through the grace of God, the priests will find in him a proper chief, the monks a teacher of their rule, the people a faithful expounder of Christ's law. And this I beg the more earnestly, because my priests near the marches of the pagans lead a life of great poverty; bread they may procure, but not clothing; nor can they remain in those places to minister to the people,

[1] Here the old man seems to have forgotten that he was writing to Fulcrede; and addresses himself directly to Pepin.

unless they are supported by some one, as they have been hitherto supported by me. Should the Spirit of God induce you to grant this my petition, deign to let me know it, either by my messengers or by your own letter, that with the greater satisfaction I may live or die your debtor." [1]

It is recorded to the honour of Pepin, that he readily assented to all the wishes of the Anglo-Saxon who had rendered such important service both to the Franks and the Germans. Lull was formally recognized as archbishop, and took the place of his predecessor in the national councils; the charter granted by Zachary in favour of the abbey at Fulda, by which it had been exempted from the jurisdiction of the diocesan and made dependent on the Apostolic See alone, was published by the king with the consent of his nobles and prelates; and the church of St. Martin at Utrecht,[2] the ancient see of the Anglo-Saxon Willibrord, was given to Boniface with all its appurtenances. He committed it to the care of his countryman Eoban, whom he ordained bishop of the Friesians.[3]

The aged prelate, relieved by Lull from the administration of the archbishopric, felt himself at liberty to resume his favourite employment of preaching to the heathen, and to revisit those nations that had been the first object of his labours. The Friesian tribes were

[1] Ser. ep. xcii. Giles, ep. lxxix.

[2] This is said to be the most early instance of any such exemption. The object of Boniface in soliciting it is evident. He wished to secure his Anglo-Saxon monks from the oppressive interference of the Frankish prelates. The charter of Zachary is in Giles, ep. lxxvii.; that of Pepin in Ser. ep. cli. Giles, ep. xcv.

[3] Giles, ii. 240. I observe that both this charter and the last contain the grant of tithes. For Eoban, see Willibald, c. ix.

of kindred origin with the Anglo-Saxons, "blood of their blood, and bone of their bones;" and to their conversion he resolved to dedicate the short remainder of his days. In 755, accompanied by the Bishop Eoban, three priests, three deacons, four monks, and forty-one laymen, he descended the Rhine, and penetrated to the centre of East Friesland. By his exhortations numbers of the idolaters were induced to abandon the altars of the gods, and to submit to the rite of baptism. After a short delay, a general assembly of the neophytes was summoned to receive the sacrament of confirmation; the fifth of June, the vigil of Pentecost, was appointed for the sacred ceremony; and in a tent on the plain of Dockum the archbishop awaited the arrival of his converts. At the break of day he was informed that a body of Friesians, completely armed, and of hostile aspect, was rapidly approaching. The laymen prepared to defend their lives; but Boniface, going out of his tent, bade them sheathe their swords, and receive with patience the crown of martyrdom. He had scarcely spoken when the barbarians rushed upon them, and immolated the whole company to their fury. But their avarice was disappointed; and instead of the treasures which they expected, they obtained only a few books, with the use of which they were unacquainted. At the news, the Christian Friesians were fired with indignation; they assembled in great numbers, and within three days revenged the death of their teacher in the blood of his murderers.[1]

[1] Vit. S. Bonif. p. 279. The benefits which Germany received from the ministry of Boniface have not screened him from the severity of criticism; and Mosheim has drawn a very disadvantageous portrait of

The fate of Boniface did not arrest the zeal of his countrymen; and the nations whom he had converted listened with docility to the instructions of his followers. But the first that added a new people to the Christian name, was Willehad, a Northumbrian priest, who, with the permission of his bishop and of King Alhred, sailed in 772 to the northern coast of Germany. As soon as he had landed, he visited the plain of Dockum, kissed the ground which had been sanctified by the blood of the martyrs, and rose from prayer animated with the spirit of his predecessor. With irresistible eloquence he preached to the barbarians the doctrine of the gospel; the dangers to which he was frequently exposed were repaid by the success of his labours; and the knowledge of the true God was successively planted on the banks of the Ems, the Weser, and the Elbe. Wigmode, the country lying between the two last rivers, became the principal theatre of his zeal; and during seven years he governed the mission with the authority, but without the ordination, of a bishop. When the Saxons made a last effort to throw off the yoke of the Franks,

the apostle of his country. If we may believe him, Boniface often employed fraud and violence to multiply the number of his converts; and his own letters prove him to have been a man of an arrogant and insidious temper, and profoundly ignorant of many necessary truths, and of the real nature of the Christian religion—(Mosh. sæc. viii. par. 1, c. 1.) As the German historian does not attempt to fortify his assertions by any reference to ancient writers, they must rest on his own authority; but if the reader think proper to peruse either the letters of the missionary, or his life by St. Willibald, or the history of the Germans by Schmidt (i. c. xii.), he will be enabled to form an accurate notion of the veracity and impartiality of his accuser. The Anglo-Saxons considered Boniface as the glory of their nation. He died in 755; and in the first synod which was held the following year they enrolled his name in the calendar, and chose him one of the patrons of their church.—Ep. Cuthb. Archiep. apud Ser. ep. lxx.; apud Giles, ep. ciii.

the Christians were the first victims of their fury. The churches erected by Willehad were demolished; five of his associates, with their companions, were massacred; and the missionary himself escaped with difficulty into Friesland. But after two years, the fortune of Charlemagne invited him to return; and he was ordained the first bishop of the Old Saxons. He chose for his residence a spot on the right bank of the Weser, where he built a cathedral, and laid the foundations of the city of Bremen. He died in 789.[1]

From Germany the zeal of the Anglo-Saxon missionaries induced them to cross the Baltic; and Sigfrid, a priest of York, about the middle of the tenth century, preached, at the request of Olave Scotkonung, king of Upsal, to the natives of Sweden. The prince, his family and army, received the sacrament of baptism; five episcopal sees were filled with pastors by the exertions of the missionary; and though he lost his three nephews by the cruelty of the idolaters, he at last succeeded in fixing the church of Sweden on a firm and lasting foundation. He died in 1002, and was buried at Wexiow, which had been his principal residence.[2] Ulfrid and Eskill, two of his countrymen, were martyred some time later by the natives.[3]

In Denmark the seeds of the gospel had been sown at different periods by the successors of St. Willehad, the archbishops of Bremen: but their success had been limited and transitory; and many missions were begun, many generations passed, before the fierce, intractable

[1] Annal. Bened. tom. ii. pp. 222, 255, 260, 291.
[2] Apud Benzel. p. 1, cit. Butler, Feb. 15.
[3] Adam. Bremen. l. ii. c. 44.

spirit of the natives could be induced to bend to the mild precepts of Christianity. A share of the merit of this pious work is due to the Anglo-Saxons, several of whom were sent by Canute the Great to Denmark, that by their virtue and preaching they might disseminate the Christian faith among his subjects. Bernard presided with episcopal authority in Schonen, Gurbrand in Zealand, and Reinher in Finland; but all three acknowledged the superior jurisdiction of Unuan, archbishop of Bremen.[1]

The first of the Norwegian kings who received the sacrament of baptism was Haco, surnamed the Good. With the zeal of a proselyte he endeavoured to propagate the Christian religion; and at his request bishops and priests were sent from England to his assistance. In a public assembly he exhorted the deputies of the nation to embrace the new worship; but they despised his eloquence and authority, and compelled him to revert to the worship of his fathers.[2] Paganism retained the superiority in Norway till the accession of St. Olave. In one of those piratical expeditions, which were the darling employment of the Northern chieftains, he was converted to the faith by a hermit on one of the Scilly islands. When he had obtained the crown by the death of Haco the Bad, he made it his principal ambition to convert his subjects. The severity of his laws abolished or repressed the practices of ancient superstition; the priests of Woden were put to death without mercy; and Norway was filled with real or pretended Christians. His assistants and advisers

[1] Chron. Holsatiæ, c. 10—13. Adam. Brem. l. ii. c. 38.
[2] Snorre, p. 138.

were Anglo-Saxons; Grimkele, bishop of Drontheim, Sigefrid, Rodolf, and Bernard, whose labours were not confined to the continent, but extended to all the islands which owned the dominion of the king of the Northmen.[1]

The above-mentioned were the last Anglo-Saxon missions within the period to which this work is limited. The Norman conquest followed; a revolution which, as it transferred the English sceptre to the hands of a foreign prince, transferred also the English church to the government of foreign prelates. But the change was confined to the persons of her rulers; in other respects she was still unchanged. In the essential points of constitution and doctrine, of liturgy and sacraments, and of subordination to the authority of the Apostolic See, there existed no difference between the new Anglo-Norman, and the old Anglo-Saxon church.

[1] Snorre, pp. 223, 258. Adam. Bremen. l. ii. c. 40, 43, anno 1027.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A (p. 2).

THE DURHAM RITUAL.

It was long known that there existed in the library of the dean and chapter at Durham an ancient manuscript to which had been given the name of the Durham Ritual, and of which Aldfrid, king of Northumbria in 685, was reported to have been the original possessor. In 1840, this manuscript was published at the cost of the Surtees Society, and under the editorship of Mr. Stevenson, who has performed the task with his usual care and ability.

The publication of the book has disappointed those who expected to find in it the order of divine service and of the administration of the sacraments, according to the form practised in the English church before the Conquest. The so-called Durham Ritual, instead of being a continuous work, is made up of fragments of liturgical books, which appear to have been previously torn in pieces, probably at the time of the Reformation. The first portion is the most valuable, as it presents to us a very ancient collectarium, containing the capitula, or short extracts from Scripture, and the several collects which were used in the daily service through the course of the year. It comes to us, however, sorely mutilated, seven leaves being lost at the beginning of the manuscript, nine after the folio numbered 17, one after number 30, and another after number 33—pages 36, 64, 70, in the printed copy.

This collectarium is divided, as all Catholic breviaries are still divided, into three parts, containing the Proprium de

tempore, the Proprium sanctorum, and the Commune sanctorum; of these parts, the two first are chiefly deserving of the reader's attention; as from them we may draw some information respecting the probable age and origin of the collection.

Whenever a new festival was established in any church, it was entered of course in all copies of the calendar written subsequently for the use of that church. Now, of the festivals entered in the Durham Collectarium, the most recent is that of "All Saints," which was established before the end of the eighth century, since it is mentioned particularly, in 799, by Alcuin in a letter to Arno, archbishop of Saltzburg.—(Op. Alc. i. p. 112.) Hence we may with great probability infer that the collectarium was not written later than the ninth century. But then it was only a copy; and there is much contained in it which indicates that its prototype was of far higher antiquity, and came originally from Rome.

1. At Rome, the year began on Christmas-day, the 25th of December. So it does also in this collectarium. If we look at the "Proprium de sanctis," we shall find that the first entry for the year is the feast of St. Stephen, on the 26th of December, the last that of St. Thomas, on the 12th of the calends of January, or December 21. The year, then, began on some day in December between the 21st and 26th, assuredly on Christmas-day.

2. In the ancient Roman sacramentaries the collects for particular festivals and seasons are accumulated in great numbers. St. Gregory reduced the number, assigning one only to the several parts of the service for the same day; and his reform, though it made its way slowly, was gradually adopted in other churches. In this respect the collectarium corresponds with the most ancient sacramentaries. The prayers seem to be multiplied in proportion to the rank of the festival. We have forty-two appropriated to the solemnity of Easter.

3. The number of collects contained in it amounts to three hundred and forty; out of which there are not a dozen which do not occur in the sacramentaries of the Popes Leo, Gelasius, and Gregory.

4. At first the church of Rome admitted none but martyrs

into the catalogue of the saints. From different calendars in Muratori (De Rebus Litur. c. iv. pp. 27, 33), it appears that the names of confessors were afterwards introduced, but at the same time very sparingly;—of St. Silvester in the fourth, of St. Martin of Tours about the sixth, and of St. Gregory in the seventh century. Here too the collectarium copies the Roman calendar. It contains the name of no other confessor, excepting St. Benedict on the fifth of the ides of July, manifestly an interpolation after the reported transport of his relics to Fleury in 653.

5. Neither is there in it the name of any British, Scottish, or Anglo-Saxon saint. There cannot be a doubt that the festivals of St. Aidan and St. Cuthbert were kept with solemnity by the ancient clergy of Lindisfarne and their successors at Chester-le-Street, and at Durham. Yet they have no place in this calendar. The days of St. Augustine and St. Boniface were ordered to be kept as holydays by the council of Cloveshoe in 747; yet neither have they any place in this collectarium. Certainly, then, it cannot have been an authorized book of the public service in any Anglo-Saxon church.

6. It contains, however, the name of a Gallic saint, St. Martin of Tours, and honours him with particular distinction. Not only is there a day dedicated to him on the 10th of November, but a service for the translation of his relics on the 4th of July. Among the collects appropriated to the former, there are three which are not to be found in the Roman sacramentaries, and which appear to have been peculiar to the church of St. Martin itself; for they allude to the people assembled there to celebrate the festival, and speak of him as "protector noster," the phrase constantly used by Alcuin in his letters written from Tours. Hence I think it probable that the collectarium belonged to the abbey of St. Martin at Tours, from which a copy might easily have been brought into England by some of the many Anglo-Saxons who visited Alcuin and their other countrymen in that monastery. With the church of St. Cuthbert, it cannot have had originally any connection.

We have not the conclusion of the Commune sanctorum. The last folio in the seventh gathering ends in the middle

of a collect for many martyrs; the next folio to that is lost, and we immediately find ourselves in one of those heterogeneous appendages so common at the end of liturgical documents written or copied in the eighth, ninth, or tenth centuries. We are first presented with the accustomed Preces ad crucem salutandam (fol. 45, p. 93), and then follows a confused mass of prayers, blessings, adjurations, charms, services at ordeals, and other things thrown together without classification or connection, and entered apparently at different times, as chance might place the originals within reach of the writer. Matters the most disparate are thus blended together under one heading; the very same form, as if its previous existence had been forgotten, is occasionally repeated within a very short space, and every entry is disfigured by a multitude of orthographical errors, which prove that the copyist was ignorant of the Latin language, and which often render the true meaning of the passage inaccessible.

In folio 65 (p. 125), the original hand disappears, and another collection follows, differing, however, in matter from the former, if we except one short entry (p. 125). That portion of it which we possess contains a beautiful hymn on the Passion—"Auctor salutis unicus,"—two for the fast of Lent, and a fourth for the festival of the Resurrection. In the midst of them are inserted directions for the responsories to be sung after the lessons of the nocturnal service from the third Sunday in September to the beginning of Advent, which are indicated by the initial words of each versicle; for nothing more was then required, because all who joined in the choral service had previously committed to memory the whole of the psalmody. It has already been remarked, that both the lessons and the responsories are the same which are now used in the Roman Breviary.

After this, at folio 66 (p. 138), we plunge into a labyrinth of fragments and detached leaves of different sizes, written in different hands and with different characters, and bound up together as if they were consecutive leaves of the same document. We meet at first with a fragment of some interest, containing the several commemorations and antiphons with which the service frequently closed

at lauds and vespers, and then several votive masses on different occasions; that is, the collects, epistles, gospels, offertories, and post-communions for such masses. Yet this fragment has suffered from the oscitancy of the binder, who has not only introduced into it a leaf from some other book (fol. 70, p. 145), but placed the first part of it after the conclusion of the second part; for "lapidati sunt" (fol. 66) is the sequel to "vincula et carceres" part of the epistle in fol. 76 (p. 162). It is plain, however, that the manuscript of which this fragment formed a part belonged to the church of Durham: for we find in it a commemoration of St. Cuthbert, though very incorrectly written (fol. 73, p. 154); and at the end of the document these words — DOMINUS SALVET, HONORET, AMET ALDHUNUM ANTISTITEM. Now, Aldhune was bishop from 990 to 1018, and was founder of the church and city of Durham. The words "salvet, honoret, amet" are borrowed from Alcuin's dedication of his treatise on the Trinity to the Emperor Charlemagne.

> Te Pater, atque Patris proles, te Spiritus almus
> Protegat, exaltet, *salvet, honoret, amet.*
>
> *Alc. Oper.* i. 704.

After these we meet with several leaves of hymns and preces, belonging to what are called the lesser hours; and in fol. 84 (p. 185), we find a large space in which the original writing has been effaced, and in its stead have been substituted four collects in honour of St. Cuthbert; to which, immediately beneath, is appended the following entry in the Anglo-Saxon language:—In South Woodgate at Aclea" (Okeley, campulus quercuum. Asser, p. 6) "in Wessex, on Lawrence's mass-day, on a Wednesday, and in the tent of the Bishop Ælfsige, Aldred the provost wrote these four collects, on the fifth night of the moon, before the hour of terce." From this entry it follows that the book of which this leaf formed a part belonged also to the church of St. Cuthbert in 970. For during the whole time of Ælfsige's episcopacy, from 968 to 990, that was the only year in which the festival of St. Lawrence (Aug. 10) could fall both on a Wednesday and on the fifth day of the

moon. What may have taken Ælfsige from the north into Wessex, we are not told; but we know that he accompanied Kenneth, king of Scots, to the court of Edgar, soon after the accession of the Scottish prince to the throne of his ancestors, which accession is said to have happened in 970.—(Extract. ex. Var. Chron. Scot. p. 50.) The entry also shows that the provost Aldred, the second in dignity in the church of St. Cuthbert, accompanied the bishop. He has been described as Aldred, the author of the gloss to the celebrated Durham book of the gospels (Biog. Brit. Liter. i. p. 426); but if we may believe the entries in that book (fol. lxxxviii., cclviii.), the glossator was contemporary with his fellow-labourers Eadfrith, Ethelwald, and Bilfrith, who lived in the first part of the eighth century. Neither is there any proof that Aldred the provost was the writer of the gloss in the Durham Ritual. Of his literary character we know nothing more than that he was not a very correct scribe; for in the fourth line of the first collect, he has omitted the word *facias* before *precibus*, and in the third line of the second has substituted *salutis* far the words *sorte salvati*, as the original collects run in the old sacramentaries. The remainder of the leaf is occupied by directions for the antiphons and responses on the four Sundays in Advent; and then follow four leaves of some other manuscript filled with matters which are totally unconnected with the church service.

From the preceding analysis, it follows that this book can have no claim to the title which has so long been given to it, of the Durham Ritual. It is no ritual at all. If we except the collectarium at the beginning, the manuscripts out of which it has been made up appear to have been collections gathered by individuals for private use. They throw, indeed, a little, but it is very little, light on the choral and liturgical service in the church of St. Cuthbert. The entries, scattered here and there, of the hymns and preces at the lesser hours, of the commemorations of the books of Scripture out of which the lessons were read at matins, and of the responses and antiphons, accord with those in the Catholic breviaries of the present day, and consequently serve to prove the common origin of both. The same may perhaps be true of the forms of mass adapted

to particular occasions, which occur in pp. 138, 143, 158, 162; but it cannot be asserted with equal confidence, because we know that such forms were often composed for *private* devotion; for we have a collection of them in the works of Alcuin composed by himself.—Op. ii. 6. Misi cartulam missalem vobis . . . . . ut habeatis singulis diebus, quibus preces Deo dirigere cuilibet placeat.—Id. i. ep. cxcii. p. 256.

NOTE B (p. 26).

ON THE CORONATION OF KINGS.

The origin of the ceremonies which, during many centuries, have accompanied the coronation of princes, has by some writers been ascribed to the policy of usurpers, who sought to cover the defect of their title under the sanction of religion. Carte, in a long and learned dissertation, has laboured to prove that Phocas, who assumed the imperial purple in 602, was the first of the Christian emperors whose coronation was performed as a religious rite—Carte, Hist. vol. i. p. 290. It is, indeed, true that Phocas was the first who is expressly said to have received the regal unction at his inauguration; but it is equally true that most, perhaps all, of his predecessors, from the accession of Theodosius in 450, were crowned by the hands of the patriarch of Constantinople; and the very selection of that prelate to perform the ceremony will justify the inference, that the coronation of the emperors was not merely a civil rite, but accompanied with acts of religious worship. Carte, indeed, contends that the patriarch was chosen, because he was the first officer in the empire; but this assertion is supported by no proof, and is overturned by the testimony of the poet Corippus, to whom he appeals. That writer, in his description of the coronation of the Emperor Justin, in 565, expressly mentions the prayers and benediction of the patriarch.

Postquam cuncta videt ritu perfecta priorum
Pontificum summus plenaque ætate venustus,
Astantem *benedixit* eum, cœlique potentem
Exorans Dominum, sacro diademate jussit
Augustum sancire caput, summoque coronam
Imponens capiti feliciter—

Corip. l. ii.

With respect to other princes, Gildas, who wrote before the accession of Phocas, informs us that the kings who reigned in Britain about the close of the fifth century were accustomed to receive the regal unction (Gild. p. 82); and from the fact recorded of S. Columba by his ancient biographer Cumineus, it appears that the princes of Ireland in the sixth century were crowned with ceremonies resembling the ordination of priests.—(Cum. Vit. S. Colum. p. 30.) Are we then to believe that the Byzantine emperors borrowed the rite of coronation from the petty princes of Britain and Ireland? It appears to me more probable that the British chiefs, after their separation from the empire, and the recovery of their independence, caused themselves to be crowned with the same ceremonies which they knew to have been adopted by their former masters. In fact, the many instances of regal unction in the Scriptures offer a sufficient reason why every Christian nation should, at a very early period, have imitated the practice.

Carte is equally unfortunate when he asserts that Eardulf, the usurper of the Northumbrian sceptre in 797, was the first Anglo-Saxon prince who was anointed at his coronation.—(Carte, p. 293.) For, 1st, from the pontifical of Archbishop Egbert we may fairly conclude that the Northumbrian princes were anointed in his time—the first half of the eighth century. 2nd, we read of Egferth, the son and successor of Offa of Mercia, who began his reign ten years before Eardulf, that he was *hallowed to king*—to cynnz gehalgod (Chron. Sax. p. 64), and anointed to king—in regem inunctus.—(Malm. i. 130.) The date in the Chronicle is 785, but, as appears from several charters, it should be 787.

Martene has published an Ordo ad benedicendum regem Francorum, from a manuscript written by order of Ratold, abbot of Corbie, in the year 980. It is plainly copied from an Anglo-Saxon ordo: for in the prayer—Respice propitius

in preces humilitatis nostræ—where the style of the king should occur, we read, quem in regnum (N) Albionis totius, videlicet Francorum, pariter eligimus. This ordo scarcely differs from that said to have been used in England at the coronation of Ethelred, with this exception, that the latter reads in the same prayer—quem in regem Anglorum vel Saxonum pariter eligimus. It must appear singular that Ratold should have recourse to an Anglo-Saxon form for the use of the kings of France. But that which seems still more singular, is, that a very similar process was pursued as late as the year 1365. At that time, by command of Charles V., previously to his coronation at Rheims in the month of May, the "Ordo ad inunguendum et coronandum regem," or "Le livre du sacre des Rois de France," was "corrected, put in order, copied, and illuminated," and authenticated with his signature. Now that very copy has long been among the Cotton MSS. (Tib. B. viii.), and was published by Selden in his Titles of Honour (c. viii. pp. 225—255). In it the passage quoted from Ratold's manuscript has been changed into—quem in hujus regni regem pariter eligimus: yet a few lines lower down in the same prayer we meet with mention of the regale solium, videlicet Saxonum, Anglorum, Nordanchymbrorum sceptra.—(Selden, p. 235.) How it happened that this passage escaped emendation, it is not easy to conceive; but it still remains a proof that the ceremony, as it existed in France, was originally borrowed from an Anglo-Saxon form, composed soon after Mercia and Northumbria had been brought into subjection to the crown of Wessex.

NOTE C (p. 32, also p. 243 in vol. I.)

ON THE ANGLO-SAXON CHURCHES.

From the Anglo-Saxon writers may be gleaned a few detached and imperfect notices respecting the construction of their churches. Such of these as have occurred to me in the composition of the present sheets, unsatisfactory as

they are, may yet be acceptable to the reader who feels an interest in the subject.

1. The Scots were accustomed to build with split oak, and to cover the building with reeds, a custom which kept its ground in Ireland, their original seat, for many centuries —Oratorium intra paucos dies consummatum est de lignis quidem lævigatis, sed apte firmiterque contextum, opus Scotticum, pulchrum satis.—(Vit. Malach. auct. St. Bernardo, c. v. col. 1935, also col. 1952.) It was introduced among the converts in the north by the Scottish missionaries. Bishop Finan built his cathedral after their manner —more Scotorum, non de lapide, sed de robore secto—and covered it with reeds—atque arundine texit.—(Bed. iii. c. 25.) Of this manner of building a curious specimen remained lately in the church of Greenstead, in Essex. The walls were formed of the trunks of oak trees, sawed down the middle. The halves being cut away at the bottom into a tenon, were inserted into a groove cut in a horizontal piece of timber, which served for the base sustainment. A second horizontal piece of timber, grooved like the first, received by way of entablature the ridges of the trunks, which stood with their sawed faces inwards, and within one inch of each other. At the gable ends, the trunks rose gradually pedimentwise to the height of fourteen feet. To exclude the wind and rain from such edifices, we learn from Beda that it was customary to plaster them with a mortar made of clay, earth, straw, moss, and the like.—(Vit. S. Cuth. c. xlvi. p. 135.) Eadbert, bishop of Lindisfarne, adopted a more effectual, but more expensive expedient. He removed the reeds from the roof of the church built by his predecessor Finan, and covered both roofs and walls with sheets of lead—ablata arundine, plumbi laminis et tectum et parietes cooperire curavit.—Bed. Hist. iii. c. 25.

The Roman missionaries would of course introduce the Roman manner of building with stone. When Edwin of Northumbria was baptized at York, a church of timber had been hastily constructed—citato opere; but immediately afterwards, a building of stone was raised around it, under the inspection of the bishop Paulinus, who planned the new church, and instructed the workmen — docente eodem Paulino, majorem ipso in loco, et augustiorem de lapide

fabricavit basilicam, in cujus medio ipsum, quod prius fecerat, oratorium includeretur.—(Bed. Hist. ii. c. 14.) There can be no doubt, that in the south, Augustine and his disciples acted in the same manner; and after a short time we find that every celebrated church, whether in the north or south, was built of stone. Still in the country, where proper materials were not easily procured, churches of timber continued to be constructed till the time of the Conquest. St. Dunstan built churches of this description on many of the manors belonging to his bishopric—apud Magaveldum (Mayfield), sicut in aliis hospitiorum suorum locis, ligneam ecclesiam fabricavit.—Ang. Sac. ii. 207.

2. We have several accounts of the precautions taken to secure a foundation capable of sustaining the weight of a stone building. At Croyland, on account of the spongy nature of the soil, innumerable piles of oak and alder were driven into the ground, and the spaces between them filled up with dry earth brought from a distance of nine miles.—(Ingulf, fol. 485.) At Medeshamstede, the foundations were laid with stones of such enormous size, that each was drawn to its place by a team of eight yoke of oxen.—(Hug. Caud. p. 4.) At Ramsey, the stones were beaten down with rammers; and, with the aid of a very tenacious kind of mortar, were formed into one solid mass—arietum ictibus —arietum tunsionibus cum cæmento tenaciore.—Hist. Ram. c. xx. p. 399.

It appears to have been customary to excavate the ground, and to build a crypt of stone under the spot where it was intended to place the high altar. Crypta, quæ subtus majus ipsius ecclesiæ altare fabricata fuerat, ejusdem ædificii testis et index in cœmeterio nostro hodieque indemnis perdurat.—Hist. Ram. c. lxxxi. p. 437.

The crypts in the church of Winchester are thus described by the poet Wolstan, in his address to St. Elphege:—

> Quin et occultas statuistis et addere cryptas,
> Quas sic Dædalium struxerat ingenium,
> Quisquis ut ignotas veniens intraverit illas,
> Nesciat unde meat, quove pedem referat.
> Machina stat, quarum sacram subportat et aram,
> Sanctorumque pias ordine relliquias.

3. All the churches mentioned by the most ancient Saxon

writers are of a square or quadrilateral shape, and were probably built after the plan of the basilicæ at Rome—in quadrum (Bed. Hist. ii. c. 14); templum quadratum (Alc. Oper. ii. p. 550). But Ethelwold, a monk of the monastery of St. Peter, on the east coast of Bernicia (Lel. de Scriptoribus, p. 140), who wrote about the year 810, mentions not only a square, but also a cruciform church, the first of that form noticed in our annals.—Ethel. de Abbat. Lind. c. xx. xxii.

4. We are told that the walls contained spiral staircases —cochlearia (Edd. Vit. Wilf. c. xx.), and were perforated with windows, which at first had no other protection against the weather than curtains and shutters, but were afterwards furnished with glass before the conclusion of the seventh century. We read of the church built by the abbess Bugge—

> Hæc domus interius splendet luce serena,
> Quam sol per vitreas inlustrat forte fenestras,
> Limpida quadrato diffundens lumina templo.
> *Alc. Oper.* ii. 550.

About the year 676, Bennet Biscop procured workmen from Gaul, who glazed the windows not only of the church at Wearmouth, but of the porticos appendant to the church, and of the rooms in the monastery; and also taught the art of fabricating glass, not only for windows, but also for lamps, goblets, and several other purposes.—(Bed. Oper. Min. pp. 143, 144.) It appears, however, that if the men of Wearmouth ever learned the process, they soon lost it; for in 758, about twenty years after the death of Beda, the abbot Cuthbert begs of Lullus, archbishop of Mentz, to procure for him a workman skilled in the art of making glass vessels, because they had no such person in those parts. Si aliquis homo in tua sit parochia, qui vitrea vasa bene possit facere, mihi mittere digneris, aut, si fortasse ultra fines est in potestate alterius, sine tua parochia, rogo ut fraternitas tua illi suadeat, ut ad nos usque perveniat, quia ejusdem artis ignari et inopes sumus.—Ep. Bonif. lxxxix. in Serarius, cxiv. in Giles.

5. From numerous passages, it is plain that pillars were employed to support the ceiling or roof, and to divide the

area of the church into a nave and two aisles. In the new church at York the columns were united by arches.

> Hæc nimis alta domus solidis suffulta columnis,
> Supposítæ quæ stant curvatis arcubus.
> *De SS. Ec. Ebor.* v. 1507.

The aisles appear to have been divided into a great number of small chapels with altars dedicated to different saints. There were thirty of these chapels in the great church at York.

> Plurima diversis retinens solaria tectis,
> Quæ triginta tenent ornatibus aras.
> *Ibid.* v. 1512.

There were twelve in that of the abbess Bugge,

> Qua fulgent aræ bis seno nomine sacræ.
> *Alc. Oper.* ii. 550.

And so many in that at Winchester that Wolstan says—

> Plures sacris altaribus ædes,
> Quæ retinent dubium liminis introitum.
> Quisquis ut ignotis deambulet atria plantis,
> Nesciat unde meat, quove pedem referat.
> Omni parte quia fores aspiciuntur apertæ,
> Nec patet ulla sibi semita certa viæ.
> *Mab. Act. SS. Ben.* sæc. v. iii. 629.

6. In the ancient Christian temples the part appropriated to the clergy was separated by a railing from the other part appointed for the people; and was called the absis, because it terminated in a semicircular arch, against the middle of which was placed the throne of the bishop or abbot, with seats for the priests or monks on each side of him. That the same arrangement prevailed in the chief of the Anglo-Saxon churches is plain from the frequent mention of the absis in the description of such churches. Within the railing, and in front of the episcopal seat, stood the altar. This was the most sacred object in the church.

> Absidam consecrat Virginis ara.
> *Alc.* ii. p. 550.

To ornament it, no expense was spared. Gold, silver, and gems of various kinds were lavished upon it.

> Argenti laminis altare crucesque
> Texerat auratis.
>
> *De Pont. Ebor. Ecc.* v. 1224.

> Grandem construxerat aram,
> Texit et argento, gemmis simul undique et auro.
>
> *Id.* v. 1490.

> Ast altare aliud fecit, vestivit et illud
> Argento puro pretiosis atque lapillis.
>
> *Id.* v. 1500.

7. In the richer churches the walls, on days of ceremony, were covered with hangings of silk.

> Serica parietibus tendens velamina sacris,
> Auri blateolis pulchre distincta coronis.
>
> *Id.* v. 278.

> Serica suspendens peregrinis vela figuris.
>
> *Id.* v. 1267.

Paintings of religious subjects by foreign artists were also employed for the same purpose. The reader is already aware of the two journeys to Rome of Bennet Biscop, and of the manner in which he ornamented the walls of his churches with the paintings which he brought back with him. In the absis of Bugge's church were also suspended pictures of St. Peter, St. Paul, and St. Andrew.

> Hic Petrus et Paulus, quadrati lumina mundi,
> Absidam gemino tutantur numine lautam,
> Necnon Andreas.
>
> *Canis. Ant. Lec.* ii. par. ii. p. 181.

8. Another ornament consisted in the number of the lights, which in various forms were suspended from the ceiling, and kept burning during the service.

> Ut cœlum rutilat stellis fulgentibus omne,
> Sic tremulis vibrant subter testudine templi
> Ordinibus variis funalia pendula flammis.
>
> *Ethelw. de Ab.* c. xx.

Sanctaque suspendit varias per tecta lucernas,
Esset ut in templis cœli stellantis imago.
De SS. Ec. Ebor. v. 280.

Hoc altare farum supra suspenderat altum,
Qui tenet ordinibus tria grandia vasa novenis.
Ibid. v. 1494.

In addition to the lamps should be mentioned a censer or censers, hanging from the ceiling, and diffusing through the edifice the perfume of odoriferous gums.

Hic quoque thuribulum capitellis undique cinctum,
Pendet de summo, fumosa foramina pandens,
De quibus ambrosia spirabunt thura Sabæa,
Quando sacerdotes missas offerre jubentur.
Alc. Op. ii. 551.

The ceiling itself, if not open to the roof, was flat and of oak panelled; for the Anglo-Saxons, even at the Conquest, had not learned to form arched or vaulted ceilings of stone. Nondum enim arcus lapideos, quos vulgo voltas dicimus, nostri manus artificis ita plene sicut nunc attigerat, sed trabibus parietibus superpositis ecclesiam venusta testudine superficies integra palliabat.—Lel. Collect. i. 24. Edd. Vit. Wilf. c. 17.

9. Among the interior ornaments of the church, the organ must not be forgotten. We find it among the Anglo-Saxons shortly after their conversion. The person by whom it was introduced into the West is said by Platina, though with some hesitation, to have been Vitalian, the Roman pontiff.—(Plat. in Vital.) If we credit his account, we may suppose that organs were introduced into England by Theodore and Adrian, whom that pope sent to instruct our ancestors. At least it is certain that they were known to St. Aldhelm as early as the close of the seventh century. In his poem De Laudibus Virginitatis, he tells the admirer of music that, if he despise the more humble sound of the harp, he may listen to the thousand voices of the organ.

Maxima millenis auscultans organa flabris
Mulceat auditum ventosis follibus iste,
Quamvis auratis fulgescant cætera capsis.
Bib. Pat. tom. viii. p. 3.

(This passage was first discovered by Mr. Turner, vol. iv. p. 447.) About sixty years afterwards, Constantine, the Byzantine emperor, sent to Pepin an organ of excellent workmanship, which has erroneously been supposed to be the first among the Latins. It is thus described: Quod doliis ex ære conflatis, follibusque taurinis per fistulas æreas mire perflantibus, rugitu quidem tonitrui boatum, garrulitatem vero lyræ vel cymbali dulcedine coæquabat.—(Monac. Gallen. Vit. Caroli Mag. c. 10.) The French artists were eager to equal this specimen of Grecian ingenuity; and so successful were their efforts, that in the ninth century the best organs were made in France and Germany. Their superiority was acknowledged by John VIII. in a letter to Anno, bishop of Friesingen, from whom he requested an organ, and a master for the instruction of the Roman artists. Precamur ut optimum organum cum artifice, qui hoc moderari, et facere ad omnem modulationis efficaciam possit, ad instructionem musicæ disciplinæ nobis aut deferas, aut mittas.—(Sandini, in Vit. Pont. i. p. 294.) Soon afterwards we find them in common use in England, constructed by English artists, with pipes of copper fixed in gilt frames.—Aldh. ibid. Gale, pp. 266, 420.

In the old church of Winchester was a monster organ, according to its description by the monk Wolstan, whose fidelity cannot be questioned, since he dedicated his poem to the bishop Elphege, by whose order the organ was built about the close of the tenth century.

Talia et auxistis hic organa, qualia nusquam
Cernuntur, gemino constabilita solo.
Bisseni supra sociantur in ordine folles,
Inferiusque jacent quatuor atque decem.
Flatibus alternis spiracula maxima reddunt,
Quos agitant validi septuaginta viri,
Brachia versantes, multo et sudore madentes,
Certatimque suos quique monent socios,
Viribus ut totis impellant flamina sursum,
Rugiat et pleno capsa referta sinu.
Sola quadringentas quæ sustinet ordine musas,
Quas manus organici temperat ingenii.
Has aperit clausus, iterumque has claudit apertas,
Exigit ut varii certa camœna soni.
Considuntque duo concordi pectore fratres,
Et regit alphabetum rector uterque suum.

Suntque quater denis occulta foramina linguis,
Inque suo retinet ordine quæque decem.
Huc aliæ currunt, illuc aliæque recurrunt,
Servantes modulis singula puncta suis,
Et feriunt jubilum septem discrimina vocum,
Permixto lyrici carmine semitoni.
Wolstani Carm. SS. Ben. sæc. v. tom. iii. p. 631.

10. We now pass to the external appendages of the church, of which the principal was the portico, an open peristyle attached to the body of the church, and leading into it. In the portico the pilgrims were accustomed "adorare limina," or to pray in silence prostrate on the pavement in face of the entrance, which they kissed before they set foot within the sacred building. We learn that at Rome the church of St. Peter, besides a spacious atrium and vestibule, had also an extensive portico on each side—Sub eadem mole tectorum geminis utrinque porticibus latera diffundit (Paulin. Ep. ad Aleth. ep. 33); and it would appear that the church of St. Peter and St. Paul, near Canterbury, was built on a similar plan; for Beda informs us that it had two if not more porticos; St. Martin's portico, set apart for the sepulture of the kings and queens of Kent; and the north portico, set apart for that of the archbishops.—(Bed. Hist. ii. c. 5.) In St. Wilfrid's church at Hexham, a portico was built in front of every entrance (Edd. c. xxii.); and several porticos surrounded the new church at York—

Pulchraque porticibus fulget circumdata multis.
Alc. de Pont. v. 1508.

Another external building was the domus cloccarum or belfry, generally an ornamental building, and raised to a considerable height, for the better diffusion of the sound. It was the wish of Alcuin that the roof of the belfry at York might be covered with tin. It would add to its appearance, and become the celebrity of the place—Videtur condignum ut domuscula cloccarum stanno tegatur, propter ornamentum et loci celebritatem.—(Alc. Oper. i. ep. 171, p. 231.) This passage intimates that there were several bells in the belfry; the following shows that with them they sometimes rang a merry peal:—

Nec minus ex cipro sonitant *ad gaudia* fratrum
Ænea vasa, cavis crepitant quæ pendula sistris.
Ethelwold, c. xiv. p. 314.

To announce a death or a funeral, a single bell was tolled, as is done now, in a particular manner. Audivit subito in aere *notum* campanæ sonum, quo ad orationes excitari vel convocari solebant, cum quis eorum e sæculo fuisset evocatus.—(Hist. l. iv. c. 23.) There can be no doubt that the use of the bell for religious purposes had been long known; and the above has been often instanced as the earliest mention of it under the name of campana. But this is a mistake. It is to be found in Cumineus, abbot of Iona, who wrote long before Beda, in his life of St. Columba (c. xxii. xxv.). By Alfred it is translated cluꝫꝫa, a clock (p. 595, Smith's edit.); and the same word, with Latin terminations, is frequently used in the correspondence of the Anglo-Saxon missionaries in Germany. Thus St. Boniface begs a clocca or bell of Hwætbert, abbot of Wearmouth (Ep. Bon. ix. p. 13), and Cuthbert sends a clocca, qualem ad manum habuit, to Archbishop Lullus.—(Ep. lxxxix. p. 124.) The same word is also used by Gallic and German writers of the same age.—See the lives of St. Liudger, and St. Angilbert, in Actis SS. Ben. sæc. iv. tom. i. pp. 33, 57, 116.

11. The belfry appears to have suggested the idea of the spire and tower. In a contemporary drawing (No. 32) in the Benedictional of St. Ethelwold, we have the representation of a belfry, probably the belfry belonging to his cathedral. It consists of three stories or compartments. In the lowest of the three, which just overtops the body of the church, appear the bells; the second, of smaller dimensions both in height and breadth, rests on the roof of the first; and on this stands the third, proportionally smaller than the second, with its roof ending in a point at the centre, from which springs a long upright rod crowned with a vane. It appears to answer the description given by Wolstan of the tower at the western front of the church.

Turris erat *rostrata tholis* quia maxima quædam
Illius ante sacri pulcherrima limina templi.
Act. SS. Ben. sæc. iv. tom. ii. p. 70.

St. Ethelwold was the chief benefactor of this cathedral, which he in a great measure rebuilt about the year 980. He afterwards laid the foundations of an additional building at the east end—a cardine jecit Eoo (Wols. sæc. v. p. 630) —which was completed by his successor, St. Elphege. That prelate added a tower, consisting of five stories, in each of which were four windows corresponding with the four points of the compass. Now in these windows lights were kept burning from sunset to sunrise, plainly, as it appears to me, that the bewildered wayfarer on the downs, during the darkness of the night, might have a beacon to direct his steps towards the city. I subjoin the poet's description of this tower, not only because it presents a favourable specimen of his abilities, but also because it gives us information respecting the lights at night, the joy of the traveller, and the form of the vane.

Insuper excelsum fecistis et addere templum,
Quo sine nocte manet continuata dies.
Turris ab axe micat, quo sol oriendo coruscat,
Et spargit lucis spicula prima suæ.
Stat super auratis virgæ fabricatio bullis,
Aureus et totum splendor adornat opus.
Luna coronato quoties radiaverit ortu,
Alterum ab æde sacra surgit ad astra jubar.
Si nocte inspiciat hunc prætereundo viator,
Et terram stellas credit habere suas.
Additur ad speciem, stat ei quod vertice Gallus
Aureus ornatu, grandis et intuitu.
Despicit omne solum, cunctis supereminet arvis,
Signiferi et Boreæ sidera pulchra videns.
Imperii sceptrum pedibus tenet ille superbis,
Stat super et cunctum Wintoniæ populum.
Imperat et cunctis evectus in aera gallis,
Et regit occiduum nobilis imperium.
Impiger imbriferos qui suscipit undique ventos,
Seque rotando suam præbet eis faciem.
Turbinis horrisonos suffertque viriliter ictus,
Intrepidus perstans, flabra, nives tolerans.
Oceano solem solus vidit ipse ruentem ;
Auroræ primum cernit et hic radium.
A longe adveniens oculo vicinus adhæret,
Figit et adspectum dissociante loco ;
Quo fessus rapitur visu mirante viator,
Et pede disjunctus, lumine junctus adest.

Act. SS. Bened. sæc. v. p. 631.

It is probable that for a long while, all these towers were separate from the main building. We meet with one at Ramsey, at the west end, like the old tower at Winchester, and in front of the church. It offered a beautiful object to the traveller when he landed on the island, and pointed out the way to the abbey,—a matter of consequence to the fugitives who were in search of an asylum. Turris versus occidentem in fronte basilicæ pulchrum intrantibus insulam a longe spectaculum exhibebat.—Hist. Ram. c. xx. p. 339.

Another improvement, however, took place before the Conquest. The Anglo-Saxon architects ventured to remove the tower from the outside, and to raise it of stone over the middle of the transept in cruciform churches, supporting it on four large pillars bound together by arches—In quadriferæ structuræ medio columnas quatuor, porrectis de alia ad aliam arcubus sibi invicem connexas, ne late diffluerent, turris deprimebat.—Ibid. c. xx. p. 399.

NOTE D (p. 37).

DEDICATION OF CHURCHES.

It has been generally understood that, from the time of the conversion of Constantine, the solemn consecration and dedication of churches was in constant use in every Christian nation. But lately Mr. Rees, in his Essay on the Welsh Saints, has informed us that it was a Romish superstition, from which the ancient church of Britain was entirely free (Rees, sec. iii. p. 57); for, of the churches still existing in Wales, the greater portion derive their names from their founders, while the others, which are known to have had patron saints, are much fewer in number, and of more recent foundation.

It is not easy to discover the force of this reasoning. Llan was originally synonymous with monastery, meaning a religious establishment; and was used in conjunction with the name of the founder, or perhaps the superior, to

distinguish one religious establishment from another. Thus Llancadog was the monastery of Cadoc. Certainly it will not be contended that such an appellation is a proof that the church of the monastery had never been consecrated. In the reign of Edward the First, Rhys Fychan presented to the archbishop of Canterbury a complaint that "the church of St. David, which they call Llangadoc," had been spoiled by the English (Rees, p. 50); showing by these words that, in his time, though a church were dedicated to a saint, the people were still accustomed to call it after the name of the founder. The fact is, that the church was only a portion of the Llan or monastery; the other buildings have long since disappeared, but the church still remains, and retains the old appellation of the entire establishment.

If the statement that the churches which are known to have had patron saints are of more recent foundation be correct,—for it is founded on a fanciful and fallacious hypothesis,—it will only follow that the memory of consecrations made in later times has been better preserved than of those which took place in very distant and barbarous ages.

In opposition to such loose reasoning we have the testimony of Gildas, a Briton, who wrote about the year 550, that, on the cessation of the persecution in the beginning of the fourth century, the natives "founded, built, and completed churches of the martyrs"—basilicas martyrum fundant, construunt, perficiunt.—(Gild. p. 19.) What can be understood by churches of the martyrs but churches dedicated to the martyrs?

Beda informs us that Augustine found in the neighbourhood of Canterbury a church built in honour of St. Martin, while the Romans inhabited Britain—Erat autem prope civitatem ad orientem ecclesia in honorem Si. Martini antiquitus facta, dum adhuc Romani Britanniam incolerent.—(Hist. i. c. 26.) Here then we have a church built and dedicated in Britain about the beginning of the fifth century.

St. Germanus of Auxerre is always held out as the great reformer and teacher of the British church. Its chief doctors and schools are represented as owing their celebrity to his zeal and institution. Now that prelate was in the

habit of consecrating and dedicating churches: for on his return from Britain to Auxerre, he built a new church, placed in it some dust which he had taken from the tomb of the British martyr St. Alban, and dedicated it in honour of that saint.—Act. SS. Jul. vii. 258.

Mr. Rees, however, has two passages in store from Beda, which, he thinks, "will decide the question;" one in which it is said that "Finan, the bishop, built in the island of Lindisfarne a church fit for an episcopal see, which at a later time was dedicated by Archbishop Theodore in honour of the blessed apostle Peter" (Bed. iii. c. 25); the other in which it is said that it was the custom of the Scots first to consecrate with fasting and prayer those places which had been newly obtained for founding a monastery or church.—Id. iii. c. 23.

Now it should be observed, that in these passages two different nations and different churches are confounded,—the British with the Scottish. The Scots were not Britons; they did not receive the gospel at the same time, nor from the same missionaries. They were a people of Ireland, converted by St. Patrick, and had no other connection with the Britons than what resulted from their common profession of the Christian faith. If, then, the Scots had been ignorant of the rite of consecrating churches, it would not follow that the Britons were equally ignorant of it. However, let us examine whether such ignorance applies to the Scots or not.

Of the two passages on which Mr. Rees founds his opinion, one is completely irrelevant. It has no reference to the dedication of a church already built, but to the consecration of an uninhabited district, in which it was intended to found a monastery. It was the custom of those from whom he (Cedd) had learned the form of regular discipline, first of all to consecrate to the Lord with prayer and fasting the places which had lately been given to them for the purpose of building a church or monastery—Hanc esse consuetudinem eorum, a quibus normam disciplinæ regularis dedicerat, ut accepta nuper loca ad faciendum monasterium vel ecclesiam, prius orationibus ac jejuniis Domino consecrarent. Hence Cedd, having received from the king a wild and desolate district, more likely to furnish hiding-

places for robbers and wild beasts than a dwelling-place for man, begged permission to spend there the time of Lent, that by prayer and fasting he might purify it from any former defilement, and so lay the foundation of the monastery—Locum primo precibus et jejuniis a pristina flagitiorum sorde purgare, et sic in eo monasterii fundamenta jacere.—(Bed. iii. c. 23.) Certainly this passage proves nothing respecting the consecration or non-consecration of a church already built; it regards only the taking possession of the land before the foundation is even dug.

The reader will more perfectly understand the other passage, if he attend to the following remarks:—Aidan, the first bishop of Northumbria, whenever he retired to Lindisfarne, lived in the monastery as a simple monk under the government of the abbot. It is probable that such conduct was not to the taste of Finan, his successor; for that prelate built at Lindisfarne another church fit for the seat of a bishop, meaning undoubtedly to exercise the episcopal office in his own church. But whether his successors imitated him, or followed the example of St. Aidan, we know not. But four years after his death, St. Wilfrid fixed his residence at Hexham. Theodore afterwards came to Northumbria, divided the northern part into two bishoprics, and gave one portion to the abbot of Lindisfarne, whom he ordained bishop. It was probably at this time that he consecrated the church for the cathedral. Hence all that can be inferred from the passage in Beda is, that the building raised by Finan was consecrated by Theodore; but whether it was consecrated then, because it had never been used as a church before, or because it had been used without consecration, or because it was now made the cathedral for a new bishopric, is unknown. We are merely told that—in insula Lindisfarnensi Finan fecit ecclesiam episcopali sedi congruam, quam tamen more Scottorum non de lapide sed de robore secto totam composuit, atque arundine texit, quam tempore sequenti reverentissimus archiepiscopus Theodorus in honore beati apostoli Petri dedicavit.—Bed. iii. c. 25.

That, however, it was the custom of the Scottish bishops to consecrate their churches, is evident from the canon published by St. Patrick, in the synod which he held together

with the bishops Auxilius et Iserninus. "If any of the priests build a church, let him not offer before he bring his bishop, that he may consecrate it; for so it becometh." Si quis presbyterorum ecclesiam ædificaverit, non offerat antequam adducat suum pontificem, ut eam consecret; quia sic decet.—Spelm. Con. i. p. 53. Wilk. Con. i. p. 2.

There cannot then be a doubt that both the British and the Scottish Christians were accustomed to consecrate their churches, like their brethren in other countries.

NOTE E (p. 84).

ANGLO-SAXON CALENDARS.

Mabillon, in his Analecta Vetera, p. 68, has published an ancient litany which he has entitled — Veteres Litaniæ Anglicanæ. He discovered the manuscript at Rheims; and was induced to give to it that title from a petition which it contains for the prosperity of the clergy and the people of the Angles—Ut clerum et plebem Anglorum conservare digneris (p. 169).—As not one of the saints mentioned in it is known to have lived after the year 650, we may infer that it was composed towards the end of the seventh century.

Were it certain that this litany belonged originally to the Anglo-Saxon church, it would undoubtedly be a very curious document. But there are many reasons to question it. It does not contain the name of any missionary who preached to the Anglo-Saxons,—not even that of St. Augustine of Canterbury,—nor of any of those ancient British saints who are known to have been admitted into the Anglo-Saxon calendars; but the majority of the names are evidently British or Scottish, and, as far as they are known in history, belonged to persons who flourished in Wales, Ireland, Scotland, and Armorica. If this litany had formerly been in use among the Saxons, how happened it that all these names, with one or two exceptions, should have been afterwards expunged, and others admitted in their place?

For these reasons I am inclined to think that this litany belonged to one of the Welsh or Armorican churches, and would attribute the insertion of the petition in favour of the English clergy and people to the fact of the country having been added by conquest to the Anglo-Saxon dominions, or to gratitude for the benefactions received from Anglo-Saxon princes. Alfred frequently bestowed valuable presents on churches in Wales and Armorica. — Asser, p. 67.

The most ancient Anglo-Saxon work which we possess respecting the festivals of the saints, is the Martyrology by Beda. It was the object of the venerable writer (so he informs us) to collect from every accessible source the names of all who had at any time shed their blood for Christ, and to mark the day on which, the judges under whom, and the manner of death which they suffered. But though he professed to confine his work to the martyrs, he has admitted among them the few confessors who were at this time entered in the Roman calendar, and has added to them the three missionaries from Rome,—Augustine, Paulinus, and Mellitus, and the bishops Patrick and Cuthbert, with the virgins Ædilthryde and Gertrude. The two Ewalds, the only two Anglo-Saxons who had hitherto suffered martyrdom, are commemorated by him on the 3rd of October, the day of their death.—See Henschenius in the Acta SS. pref. to tom. i. of January, and Prolegomena to tom. ii. of March; Smith in his edition of Beda, p. 327; and Giles, Bedæ Opera, vol. iv. p. 16.

Among the works of Beda has been published a calendar in hexameter verse, under the title of "Martyrologium Poeticum." It cannot be the work of Beda, because it mentions the second Wilfrid of York, who died several years after Beda.

> Wilfridus ternis (3° cal.) superam penetravit in aulam
> Tempore posterior, non morum flore secundus.

It is, however, of great antiquity; for this Wilfrid is the most recent name recorded in it; and, as it orders the dedication of the church to be commemorated on the 27th of April, the very day on which the church of Jarrow was dedicated, it may be assumed to be the calendar of the

saints whose memory was annually celebrated in that monastery about the close of the eighth century. The following table will represent its contents:—

January.

1. Circumcision.
6. Epiphany.
10. Paul, C.
17. Anthony, C.
20. Sebastian, M.
21. Agnes, V. M.
22. Anastasius, M.
25. Conversion of St. Paul.

February.

1. Polycarp, B. M.
2. Purification.
5. Agatha, V. M.
14. Valentine, M.
16. Juliana, V.
22. Chair of St. Peter.
24. Matthias, A.

March.

12. Gregory, P. C.
17. Patrick, B. C.
20. Cuthbert, B. C.
21. Benedict, C.
25. Annunciation.

April.

23. George, M.
24. Egcbert, C.
— Wilfrid, B. C.
25. Mark, E.
27. Dedication.
29. Wilfrid the younger, B. C.

May.

1. Philip and James, AA.
7. John of Beverley, B. C.
12. Pancras, M.
18. Mark, M.

June.

5. Lambert, B. C.
10. Barnaby, A.
19. Gervase and Protase, MM.
24. John the Baptist.
26. John and Paul, MM.
29. Peter and Paul, AA.

July.

4. Dedication of St. Martin's.
25. James, A.
28. Sampson, B. C.
30. Abdon and Sennen, MM.

August.

1. The Maccabees.
6. Xystus, P. M.
10. Lawrence, M.
15. Assumption.
22. Timothy and Symphorian, MM.
25. Bartholomew, A.
29. Decollation of John Baptist.

September.

8. Nativity of B. V. M.
14. Cornelius and Cyprian, MM.
16. Euphemia, V.
21. Matthew, A.
22. Maurice, M.
27. Cosmas and Damian, MM.
29. Michael, Archangel.
30. Jerome, C. D.

October.

2. Bosa, B. C.
3. Ewalds, MM.
10. Paulinus, B. C.
18. Luke, E.
28. Simon and Jude, AA.

November.

1. All Saints.
11. Martin, B. C.
17. Tecla, V. M.
22. Cecily, V. M.
23. Clement, P. M.
24. Chrysogonus, M.
30. Andrew, A.

December.

20. Ignatius, B. M.
21. Thomas, A.
25. Christmas-day.
26. Stephen, M.
27. John, A. E.
28. Innocents.
31. Silvester, P. C.

Besides this calendar in Latin verse, we possess another in the form of a poem in the vernacular tongue, which has been published by Mr. Fox, under the title of "Menologium; or, the Poetical Calendar of the Anglo-Saxons." It begins thus:—

Christ was born,
Of kings the glory,
At mid-winter:
Illustrious Lord!
Eternal Almighty!
On the eighth day,
Jesus was named,
Heaven-kingdom's guardian, &c.

There is this peculiarity in it, that it cautiously avoids the language of the Roman calendar, which was still in use, and fixes the recurrence of each festival by reckoning the number of days which separate it from the last that was mentioned. Thus we are told that the nativity of Christ is to be kept at mid-winter; that the eighth day following is the Circumcision: five days afterwards comes the Epiphany; then reckon four weeks with the exception of two days, and you have the month of February: the next day is the feast of the Purification; five days later is the commencement of spring; and the seventeenth day of spring is the festival of St. Matthias the apostle.

It is difficult to discover on what principle the selection of the festivals has been made. We have the accustomed holidays in honour of our blessed Lord and his Holy Mother, of the several apostles, of the Archangel Michael and John the Baptist, of the Invention of the Cross, and of All Hallows. To these are added the days of the saints Gregory, Benedict, Augustine, Lawrence, Martin, and Clement; of the vernal equinox on the 21st of March, of the Relics on the 20th of April, and of Lammas-day, the 1st of August. It repeatedly happened, that to enforce the observance of holidays, and to secure cessation from labour on those days for slaves and dependents, a list of such festivals was published by the king in the assembly of the witan; and there are still several instances of such publication in the laws enacted during the reigns of Alfred, Edgar, Ethelred, and Canute. Now it might at first glance be

imagined that all the days mentioned in the Menology were to be observed in that manner; for the reader is thus addressed at the conclusion: "Now may ye find—the tides of the saints—that men must observe—as goeth the order —through Britain's kingdoms—of the Saxons' king—at this same tide."—(Menol. p. 44.) If, however, we compare the Menology with the lists of holidays which we possess, it will be difficult to believe that all the days enumerated in it were to be kept with cessation from labour. Whence it seems more probable that the author introduced into his work all the days which were kept with "fuller service" in his church, and were, of course, better known in the neighbourhood. This would facilitate the calculation to his readers, and enable them to "find the tides" contained in "the king's order."

Wanley (pp. 106, 185) has published two imperfect copies of an ancient Menology, both written in the tenth century, and existing, one among the Cotton MSS. Jul. A. 10, and the other in the library of C. C. C. Cambridge. It appears to have belonged to Jarrow or Wearmouth, or some neighbouring church; for it mentions Benedict, Easterwine, and Ceolfrith, all abbots of Wearmouth, and Aidan and Eadbyrt, both bishops of Lindisfarne.

But the most perfect calendar is probably that which is found in Martene's Amplissima Collectio (tom. vi. p. 652), under the title of Calendarium Anglicanum. Of English saints, it records, in addition to those already mentioned, Cuthman, Eormenhilde, and Oswald of York, on the 8th, 13th, and 28th of February; Chad, Withburge, and Edward, king and martyr, on the 2nd, 17th, and 18th of March; Guthlake, Wilfrid, and Erconwald, on the 3rd, 24th, and 30th of April; Ælfgive on the 18th of May; Boniface and Ædilthryde on the 5th and 21st of June; Swithin, Grimbald, Sexburge, and Mildrythe, on the 2nd, 6th, 8th, and 12th of July; Oswald, king, and Helene, queen, on the 5th and 18th of August; Birinus on the 4th of September; Ædilthryde, and the ordination of St. Swithin, on the 17th and 30th of October. That this calendar belonged to the church of Winchester is evident from the last entry. The feast of St. Edward was fixed to the 18th of March, in the year 987; that of St. Dunstan, to the 19th of May, in the

midst of the reign of Canute; whence, as the first of these is found in the calendar, and the second is wanting, it will follow that this copy was written between those two periods.

Though the Roman canon of the mass was common to the Western church, yet national and provincial churches did not hesitate to introduce into it the names of certain saints whom they held in high veneration. Of this an instance has been already noticed from an ancient Gallican missal (vol. i. p. 385). Another is furnished by the Anglo-Saxon missal which Robert, archbishop of Canterbury, in 1050, left to the abbey of Jumiéges, in Normandy. It is now in the public library at Rouen (No. 34); and from the Paschal table which it contains, reaching from the year 1000 to 1095, must have been written about the commencement of the eleventh century. In that missal we find, in the prayer *Communicantes* before the consecration, the usual names of the saints, ending with Cosmas and Damian, to which are added those of George, Benedict, Martin, and Gregory; and in the prayer *Nobis quoque peccatoribus*, after the consecration, the names of Ædilthryde and Gertrude are added to those ending with Perpetua and Anastasia. In the first instance, St. George has the precedence, because he belonged to the class of martyrs just enumerated, and Benedict is placed at the head of the confessors, probably because the missal was written for the use of a Benedictine monastery. In the second, by Ædilthryde we are to understand the queen of Northumbria, who died abbess of Ely; by Gertrude, the daughter of Pepin of Landen, who died abbess of Nivelles, in Brabant. The name of St. George occurs in all the Anglo-Saxon calendars and litanies, and its introduction into the canon of the mass may justify a notion that he was already looked upon as a sort of patron by the military part of the nation. It will be more difficult to discover why a female saint from Belgium should be particularly named in an Anglo-Saxon missal. We only know that Gertrude was reckoned among the most illustrious saints of her own country, and that her fame had penetrated into England at a very early period; for she is commemorated by Beda in his Martyrology on the 17th of March.

NOTE F (pp. 98, 116).

CEOLFRITH.

The biography of Ceolfrith has been written by two of his disciples, monks of Jarrow,—by one who has not left us his name, and by Beda, who often copies the narrative of the other. Both have preserved in their pages many particulars illustrative of the habits of the Anglo-Saxons at that period.

Ceolfrith was born in the year 642, and was allied to some of the first families in Northumbria. His father held "the most noble office of ealdorman," and was not less distinguished by his piety than his rank. Of his charity to the poor the following instance has been transmitted to us. He had invited the king and court to an entertainment to be given at his "tune;" and a banquet had been prepared on the highest scale of Anglo-Saxon magnificence (permagnificas), when intelligence was brought that an unexpected demonstration of hostility demanded the presence of the sovereign in a distant part of his dominions. The ealdorman did not hesitate a moment: his messengers invited all the poor of the district to supply the place of the king and the nobles; and dividing them on their arrival into two bodies, he waited in person on the men at their table, while his wife performed the same menial office for the females.—Bed. Oper. Min. p. 331.

Ceolfrith had an elder brother, Cynfrith, abbot of Gætlingum (now Gilling, near Richmond), the place where Oswin, king of Deira, was slain by order of Oswiu, king of Bernicia; and where Eanfled, the consort of the latter, had built a monastery, "that prayers might daily be offered for the salvation of both princes, the murdered and the murderer." But Cynfrith, preferring a "contemplative" to an active life, abandoned his abbey and country, and withdrew to Ireland, that "he might there meditate on the Scriptures, and offer to God his prayers and tears in exile and

solitude." Soon after his departure, Ceolfrith, in his eighteenth year, took the monastic habit in the same monastery of Gilling, whence he afterwards migrated with the brotherhood to Ripon, at the invitation of St. Wilfrid. About the same time his brother, with several other "English noblemen," fell a victim to the pestilence which depopulated Ireland.

At the age of twenty-seven he was ordained priest; and repaired to Canterbury, that he might improve himself in the practice of his profession, under the instruction of the disciples of St. Augustine. From Canterbury he proceeded with the same object in view to Icanho, in East Anglia, where he placed himself for a time under the direction of the celebrated St. Botulf. On his return to Ripon, he was raised to the important office of master of the novices.

Among the prejudices of the ethelborn Saxons there was none so difficult to extirpate as their aversion to manual labour. It formed in their opinion the distinctive mark between the freeman and the thrall; to stoop to it was to degrade themselves from their own caste. Yet manual labour was originally thought essential to the monastic profession; and the new master of the novices, to give the example, took upon himself the charge of the bakehouse. There Ceolfrith was to be daily found, "cleansing or heating the oven, and bolting the meal, and baking the bread for the whole community."

His reputation reached the ears of Bennet Biscop, the founder of the monastery of Wearmouth, who solicited and obtained his services for the benefit of the new establishment. Some years later he was commissioned with about twenty companions to found another monastery at Jarrow, which he governed under Bennet with the title of abbot. It was during this time that the dreadful scourge called the yellow sickness spread itself over every part of England. Of the whole community it spared two only,—the abbot and a young boy, who never failed to chant together the whole of the daily service in this time of mortality and distress. That boy, if I mistake not, was Beda, the celebrated writer and historian. Excepto ipso abbate et uno puerulo, qui ab ipso adnutritus et eruditus, nunc usque in eodem monas-

terio presbyterii gradum tenens, jure actus ejus laudabiles cunctis scire volentibus et scripto commendat et fatu.—Ibid. p. 323.

On the death of Bennet (12th January, 688), Ceolfrith was elected abbot of both monasteries. Of the manner in which he discharged that important office, during seven-and-twenty years, a copious account has been left by his biographers; but the manner in which he resigned it will prove more interesting to most readers. At a more early period he had accompanied Bennet Biscop in his fifth pilgrimage to Rome; and the impression which that visit had made on his mind was never obliterated. As he advanced in age, he formed the design of quitting his country, and spending the remainder of his days at the tombs of the apostles; but, aware of the opposition which he must encounter, he kept it a secret in his own breast. He selected openly presents to be made to the pontiff, named certain monks to take charge of them, and hired a vessel lying in the river, to convey the deputation to France. When every preparation had been made, he announced his real object to his monks (2nd June, 716); their tears and entreaties were in vain, and he fixed the second day afterwards for his departure. At an early hour Ceolfrith celebrated mass in both of his churches, at which all who were present communicated with him. Soon afterwards he summoned them into the church of St. Peter, and having offered incense, and sung the prayer, stood with the censer in his hand on the step of his seat, and admitted them to the kiss of peace. Thence he proceeded to the chapel of St. Lawrence, offered incense again, and addressed them for the last time, begging of them to live in harmony with each other, to preserve the union of the two monasteries, and to forgive him, if he had offended any among them, as sincerely as he forgave those who might have offended him. The procession now formed. At its head was borne on high by a deacon the golden cross which Ceolfrith had formerly given to the abbey; another deacon followed with lights; the monks came next, singing the sixty-sixth psalm, "Deus misereatur nostri;" and last of all the abbot himself, who chanted the collect on the bank of the river, gave again the kiss of peace, and entered the vessel. It bore him across the stream, seated between

the two deacons, and looking repeatedly at those whom he had left behind. On a sudden he burst into tears, and exclaimed, "Almighty God, have pity on them, and protect them. Never did I know men better disposed than they are. O Christ, my God, be thou their protector." When he reached the opposite bank, he rose, worshipped the cross, landed, and mounted his horse. It was his intention to proceed by land, and to call at several monasteries in Yorkshire: the ship was ordered to put to sea, and to wait for his arrival in the Humber.

This was the fourth of June, and it was the fourth of July before he left that river. They crept slowly along the shore, and landed thrice;—whether it was through devotion, to visit some holy place, or on account of the old man's infirmity, is not stated. At length they ventured to cross the strait, and landed probably at Cwentavic, or Estaples. Thence Ceolfrith hastened with presents to the court of King Chilperic, from whom he procured a charter of protection on his route through Gaul, and a letter of recommendation to Luitprand, king of the Lombards. His retinue now comprised eighty individuals; for the bountiful old man had admitted many to join it, who wished to profit by this opportunity of making the pilgrimage, and supplied from his own store the wants of those who were unable to provide for themselves. But his infirmities gradually increased; he became unable to sit on horseback, and was conveyed in a litter; four days later (Sept. 24), about nine in the morning, the pilgrims encamped in the plain in front of the city of Langres. Gangulf, the lord of the place, by whom Ceolfrith had been invited, immediately waited on him; but his strength was exhausted, and he expired about four in the afternoon of the same day.

The pilgrimage of Ceolfrith was literally a pilgrimage of devotion. After his departure from Wearmouth till his arrival at Langres,—an interval of four months,—he never suffered a day to pass in which he did not offer the sacrifice of the mass at an early hour, excepting on two occasions, once during a storm at sea, and afterwards when he was reduced to extreme debility on the four last days of his life. In addition, he was careful to chant daily, with his companions, the whole of the canonical service, to visit the

most celebrated churches in the road, and to spend in psalmody the other unoccupied hours of the day. His death divided the pilgrims. One party pursued their journey to Rome, furnished with guides and the means of support by the munificence of Gandulf; another remained under his protection, to mourn and pray at the tomb of their father; and the third returned home, to announce the melancholy intelligence to their brethren at Wearmouth.—See Beda's Lives of the Abbots, Oper. Min. pp. 154—162, and Vita Sanctissimi Ceolfridi abbatis, ibid. pp. 318—344.

NOTE G (pp. 105, 193).

DEUTERO-NICENE DECREE.

In the text (pp. 104–5) I have noticed the reasons which induce me to question the statement, made by Hoveden and other chroniclers, respecting the supposed rejection of the Deutero-Nicene decrees in England in the year 792. The purpose of this note is to inquire what the real amount of that statement may be, in the supposition that it was derived from some unexceptionable source.

Anno ab incarnatione Domini 792, Carolus Rex Francorum misit synodalem librum sibi a Constantinopoli directum, in quo libro, heu proh dolor! multa inconvenientia et veræ fidei contraria reperta sunt, maxime quod pene omnium orientalium doctorum, non minus quam trecentorum et amplius episcoporum, unanimi assertione confirmatum fuerit, imagines adorari debere, quod ecclesia Dei execratur. Contra quod scripsit Albinus epistolam ex auctoritate divinarum scripturarum mirabiliter affirmatam illamque cum eodem libro ex persona episcoporum et principum nostrorum regi Francorum attulit.—Hov. f. 405.

On examination it will be found that this testimony resolves itself into the three following statements of facts.

1. That Charlemagne received from Constantinople a copy of the acts or decrees of the Deutero-Nicene council, which copy he sent into England: from whom he received

it, or to whom he sent it, is not mentioned. Neither are we told whether it was a copy of the Greek original, or a Latin translation; but we must presume that it was the latter, since it was submitted to the judgment of men the greater part of whom could not be supposed to understand the Greek language.

2. That according to this copy the council had approved of several things contrary to the true faith, particularly the adoration of images,—a thing which the church of God execrates. But here we may pause to inquire what meaning the chroniclers attached in this passage to the word *adorare*. It is well known that it has two acceptations,—that of *latria*, or the worship due to God, and that of *dulia*, or religious respect paid to religious things with reference to God. Now the Anglo-Saxons of the period in question were accustomed to call themselves *crucicolæ*, or worshippers of the cross (see c. x.). Alcuin was accustomed to pray thus:—"We adore thy cross, O Lord" (ibid.). Beda continually speaks of persons adoring the cross, adoring the thresholds of the apostles, &c. (ibid.); in all which places it is evident that they use the word in the signification of *dulia*, or religious respect. But it is in the other signification that it is used by the chroniclers in the passage in question. For the worship of *dulia* was universal in the church at the time when they wrote; but that of which they speak, is said to be a worship which the church of God holds in execration. It must then be the worship of *latria* (a worship given to images which could lawfully be given to God only), that was supposed to be approved by the council; and this, as has been already shown (p. 102), was also supposed by Charlemagne and his party in Gaul.

3. Having thus stated the doctrine attributed to the council, the document proceeds to say that Alcuin refuted it in an admirable epistle, written by him in the name of the bishops and princes of the Anglo-Saxons, which epistle he took with him, together with the copy of the acts of the council, to Charlemagne.

4. This is the whole sum of the information contained in the testimony of the chroniclers. More cannot be extracted from it than the three facts just mentioned. But this

plain statement has not satisfied the prepossessions of certain modern writers; and it is amusing to observe with what ingenuity it has been amplified, and embellished, and metamorphosed in their pages, till it scarcely retains a single feature of the original. "Pope Adrian," says Mr. Soames, "fain would have won Western acquiescence in Italian degeneracy by transmitting the decrees of this popular synod (that of Nice) to Charlemagne. The Frankish conqueror communicated them to Offa, by whom they were laid before the Anglo-Saxon clergy: that body pondered them with strong surprise and rising indignation. It is true that England had long sought pleasure and information from Rome; she had also looked upon the papacy with filial deference, nor was she any stranger to imitative arts in ornamenting churches. No habit or authority was, however, powerful enough to make her invest with a sacred character any of those heathen superstitions that she saw with pain yet clinging tenaciously to her ignorant population. The papal court was now, therefore, placed under cover of a ceremonious reserve; English ecclesiastics affected to overlook its connection with the second council of Nice; they treated this assembly as merely oriental; and hence made no scruple of pronouncing its decrees a grievous disgrace to Christianity, *the worship of images being that which God's church altogether execrates.* As this language would have sounded in Roman ears much like an ironical attack, and was, in fact, no less than an open defiance of papal authority, the Anglo-Saxon divines anxiously desired an advocate, whose powerful pen might repress the inevitable displeasure of their Italian friends. Alcuin, the most illustrious of contemporary scholars, undertook this delicate task, and his execution of it excited unqualified admiration."—Soames, Anglo-Saxon Church, 2nd edit. p. 119.

But was it really so? 1st. Did Pope Adrian send the copy of the acts to Charlemagne, and send it that he might win "Western acquiescence in Italian degeneracy?" For this is the basis on which the rest of the narrative is built; this is to account for the supposed reluctance of the Anglo-Saxons to offend the pontiff, and their employment of Alcuin to mollify his displeasure. Do then the chroniclers make any mention of Italian degeneracy, or of the presumed

object of the pontiff, or of any book sent by him to Charlemagne? No; on all these subjects they are silent. In fact, their statement is a flat contradiction of the whole tale; for they state that the book came to Charlemagne, not from the pope nor from Rome, but directly from Constantinople,—librum sibi a Constantinopoli directum. 2nd. But did not Offa lay the book before the English clergy; and did not that body express surprise and indignation; and then, to veil the offence, did they not put the court of Rome under a decent reserve, affect to be ignorant of the pope's connection with the council of Nice, and treat that council as merely an Oriental assembly? No; all these pretended facts are drawn from imagination alone; there is not so much as an allusion to any one of them in the original document, which states only that Charlemagne sent the book to England, and that it was found to contain matters contrary to faith, especially that images were to be adored. 3rd. But at least the English clergy pronounced the Deutero-Nicene decrees a grievous disgrace to Christianity, *the worship of images being that which God's church altogether hateth?* No; not even is this correct. That those who found heresy in the supposed decrees would reprobate them, is evident; but the chroniclers make no statement of any judgment pronounced; and that which is here given by Mr. Soames as the judgment, is partly imaginary, and partly (with the exception of the word *worship*, substituted for *adoration*) taken from a remark made by the writer of the original document, expressive of his own individual opinion—Quod ecclesia Dei execratur. 4th. But did not the English clergy then, aware "that their language was in fact no less than an open defiance of the papal authority," employ the pen of Alcuin, as "their advocate to repress the displeasure of their Italian friends"? So, indeed, we are told by the modern historian; but not by ancient chroniclers. Of this open defiance of the papal authority, or of the employment of Alcuin to repress the displeasure of the Italians, they know nothing. They tell us merely that Alcuin wrote in the name of the English prelates and princes a letter to Charlemagne, to prove that images ought not to be adored. But this letter was written, not to the pope, but to the emperor, and was designed to support the

objections of that prince to the council,—a singular method of repressing the displeasure of Rome, if Rome had sent the book to Charlemagne with the view, as is pretended, of obtaining his acquiescence in the decrees of the council.

Mr. Soames after this proceeds to the letter presumed to have been written by Alcuin, with respect to which he assures us that "though it has not been preserved with his venerated name, it can hardly be any other but the celebrated Caroline books." But why not? Was Alcuin the author of those books? Has the ancient writer of his life, has any ancient writer, attributed the Caroline books to Alcuin? Why then must those books be the same with the epistle supposed to have been written by him, and delivered by him to Charlemagne? No reason is given; but the supposition, whether it be true or false, has been turned to good account, because, since Alcuin was an Anglo-Saxon, and commissioned, as is pretended, by the Anglo-Saxon clergy, it will follow, that the Caroline books, if written by him at their request, contain a faithful exposition of the sentiments entertained on the question by the Anglo-Saxon church.

It is, however, easy to show, both from the person to whom these books were addressed, and from the time when they were written, that they cannot be the same with the epistle attributed to Alcuin by the chroniclers.

1. The epistle was in the form of a letter to Charlemagne, and sent to him in the name of the Anglo-Saxon prelates and princes; the Caroline books are a long theological work, divided into several books, addressed not to Charlemagne, but to the pontiff, and written not in the name of any Anglo-Saxon, but of Charlemagne himself. How can they be the same?

2. The Caroline books were written at the latest in the summer of 790; the epistle attributed to Alcuin, if written by him at all, could not be written before the end of 792, or the beginning of 793.

The accuracy of these dates has been demonstrated by Froben (Præf. in part. vi. Oper. Alc. ii. 460). The author of the Caroline books states (l. i. p. 8) that the Deutero-Nicene council was held almost three years before the time in which he was writing—ferme ante triennium. Now it

is well known that that council was held in Sept. 787; whence it follows that the Caroline books were written some time in the summer of 790. But Alcuin's supposed letter to Charlemagne could not have been written till after the arrival in England of the copy of the decrees of the Nicene council, which was in the year 792; nor could it be delivered by him to that prince before his return from England, which did not happen, at the earliest, before the latter part of the same year. For we learn from Alcuin himself that the council of Ratisbon, in August, 792, was held before he returned to France — antequam ego venissem in Franciam.—Oper. Alc. i. 382.

Hence I conclude, 1st, that the testimony of the chroniclers in the twelfth century, even if we allow to it an authority to which it has no claim, will not justify the fanciful tales which have been drawn from it; 2nd, that the epistle attributed to Alcuin, if it ever existed, could not be the same with the work which has come down to us under the title of the Caroline books.

NOTE H (p. 139).

STYLE OF THE ANGLO-SAXON CHARTERS.

It has been observed by Malmesbury, in his Life of St. Aldhelm, that pomposity of style is characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon writers, who, in all their ancient charters, display their partiality for unusual words of Greek origin. Angli pompatice dictare solent, quod in omnibus antiquis chartis est animadvertere, quantum quibusdam verbis abstrusis et e Græco petitis delectentur.—(Ang. Sac. ii. 9.) But this remark, to be correct, should be confined to the latter half of the Anglo-Saxon period. The more early charters are in general brief, and expressed in plain and simple language. The proem or introduction was the part which chiefly offered to the secretary or scribe an opportunity of displaying his eloquence, by the introduction of some general observation on the exercise of charity, or the inferiority of earthly to heavenly goods, or the advan-

tage of transmitting by written records the donations of benefactors to posterity.—(See Mr. Kemble's Introduction to the Codex Diplom. p. x.) The following is a fair specimen of a proem in the middle of the eighth century; longer, indeed, than the more ancient, but very unlike the inflated style for which St. Aldhelm had been celebrated. Omnem hominem, qui secundum Deum vivit, et remunerari a Deo sperat et optat, oportet ut piis precibus assensum ex animo hilariter præbeat; quoniam certum est tanto facilius ea, quæ ipse a Deo poposcerit, consequi posse, quanto et ipse libentius hominibus recte postulata concesserit. Quod tunc bonorum omnium largitori Deo acceptabile fit, cum pro ejus amore, et utilitate famulantium ei, peragitur. Quocirca, &c. From a charter of Æthilbald, king of Mercia, anno 748.—Cod. Diplom. i. 117.

But after the death of Alfred, the composers of charters assumed in the proem a more elevated tone, and wrote in language of which Aldhelm himself might have been proud. The following form, which seems an imitation of Anglo-Saxon poetry in Latin prose, frequently occurs among the charters of Athelstan. Fortuna fallentis sæculi procax, non lacteo immarcescibilium liliorum candore amabilis, sed fellita ejulandæ corruptionis amaritudine odibilis, fœtentes filios, valle in lacrymarum carnis, rictibus debacchando venenosis mordaciter dilacerat: quæ, quamvis arridendo sit infelicibus adtractabilis, Acherontici tamen ad ima Cocyti, ni satus alti subveniat boantis, imprudenter est decurribilis. Ideo, quia ipsa ruinosa deficiendo taliter dilabitur, summopere festinandum est ad amœna indicibilis lætitiæ arva, ubi angelica hymnidicæ jubilationis organa, mellifluaque vernantium rosarum odoramina a bonis beatisque naribus inestimabiliter dulcia capiuntur, &c.—Cod. Dipl. ii. 169, 194, 198, 201.

It is in this age that we begin to meet with the frequent use of words of Greek origin, or of Greek words in Latin characters; as, theos, eon, cosmos, soter, protoplastus, dynamis, chrisma, charysma, agalma, clima, onoma, tauma, kata, gramma, symphonista, &c., and occasionally of short Greek phrases, which are generally disfigured by the ignorance of the writer or of the copyists, as ✠ En onomatos cyrion doxa—Regnante theo in eona eoni.

The celebrated St. Dunstan was dogmätist to the court, and I suspect that it was his duty in that capacity to prepare the royal charters. At least we possess one charter the composition of which he acknowledges. The proem sets out the various pretexts under which worldlings delude themselves and neglect the welfare of their souls, in language magniloquent enough, though inferior to the last specimen. But in the body of the instrument he surpasses his predecessors. They were generally content to describe the nature of the grant, its conditions and limitations, in plain and unaffected language; but he preserves the same lofty tone throughout. The king is made to say: Hujus ergo dominici conspectus et paterni amore regni perfusus, unde nobis victus restat sine dubio certus, de quo Dominus dixit, Beatus qui manducabit panem in regno Domini, Ego Eadred rex, divina gratia totius Albionis monarchus et primicerius, Christo regi meo, in throno regni perennis perpetualiter subinthronizato, e concessis mihi ab eodem labilium gazis rerum—accepti tirocinii quarto mei terrestris regni anno—ad templum suo incomprehensibili dedicatum nomini in urbe Dorobernia, Odone archiepiscopo metropolitanam cathedram possidente, et regni cœlestis super arva Britannica claves supportante, Monasterium Raculfense, bis denis senisque estimatum cassatis, interius exteriusque, cum omnibus ad hoc rebus rite pertinentibus, sive littorum, sive camporum, agrorum, saltuumve, sicut inferius territoria promulgantur, humillime atque devotissime sincero corde in perpetuum jus, quamdiu Christianitas vigeat, pro meis abluendis excessibus indeterminabiliter impendo. After the subscription of the names occurs—Ego Dunstan Abbas, rege Eadredo imperante, hanc Domino meo hæreditariam kartulam dictitando composui, et propriis digitorum articulis perscripsi ✠.—(Cod. Diplom. ii. 295.) Where the reader will observe, that though he wrote the whole charter with his own hand, he subjoins the sign of the cross to his signature, a proof that such crosses are not, as some have pretended, marks made by those who could not write, but a religious affirmation binding the consciences of the subscribers. It was as much as saying—In the name of Christ crucified, I witness and will uphold it.

The sanction or close of the charter in these instruments

is almost always the same, at least in substance—a sort of blessing promised to those who observe the grant, and of imprecation against those who break it. There is one, however, apparently the composition also of St. Dunstan, which departs from the usual style in a very singular manner —Beatus agonista totius Britanniæ Eadwi en imperat obsecrando, et obsecrat imperando, per munus evangelicæ prædicationis, ut nullus fraudulenter hoc ejus donum audeat *violare*, ne pœnas luat mortis *amaræ*. Sed unusquisque, qui animæ suæ amicus et custos velit *esse*, huic donationi suæ studeat augmentando et servando *prodesse*, ut gaudiis civium cœlestium valeat *interesse*. This is subscribed by Dunstan dogmatista, and was caraxatum anno 956.—(Cod. Dipl. ii. 326.) The words in italics were intended for rhymes.

We have another charter which begins with two Latin lines meant for hexameters. ✠ Crux quæ excelsis toto et (et toto) dominaris Olimpo, Inclyta lex Domini Christi fundamen et aulæ, Alpha mi et Ω, hujus syngraphæ initium, medium et finem vexillando faveto.—Cod. Dipl. ii. 223.

Charters were not, however, written exclusively in Latin. We have several in the Anglo-Saxon language, and it appears to me probable, that many which now exist in Latin only, are free translations from Anglo-Saxon originals.

NOTE I (pp. 143, 179).

ANGLO-SAXON VERSIFICATION.

That the general reader may form a more satisfactory notion of the Anglo-Saxon versification, I shall lay before him two short specimens, selected not on account of their intrinsic merit, but on account of their antiquity and the celebrity of their reputed authors. The first will be taken from the poem of Cædmon, with whom we are already acquainted: nor can there be any reasonable doubt of its authenticity; for it was translated by Beda (Hist. l. v. c. 14); is found in a manuscript supposed to have been

written in 737, the year after the death of Beda, called MS. Episcopi Norwicensis, and now in the public library at Cambridge; and has also been inserted by Alfred in his translation of Beda's History, with some difference in the manner of spelling, but very little in the words themselves. I print it in English characters from Alfred's work, because the spelling is more modern, and with a close translation.

Nu we sceolan herian	Now we should praise
Heofan-rices weard,	Of heaven the Sovereign,
Metodes mihte,	The Creator's might,
And his mod gethanc,	And his mind's thought,
Werc wuldor Fæder.	The works of the Father of glory.
Swa he wundra gewhes,	How he of each wonder,
Ece Drihten!	Eternal Lord!
Oord onstealde.	The beginning formed.
He ærest gesceop	He first did shape
Eorthan bearnum	For children of earth
Heofan to hrofe,	Heaven for roof,
Halig Scippend!	Holy Creator!
Tha middan geard	Then the middle earth
Mon cynnes weard,	Of mankind the guardian,
Ece Drihten!	Eternal Lord!
Æfter teode	Afterwards made,
Firum foldan,	For men the ground,
Frea ælmihtig!	Ruler Almighty!

Beda has translated these lines in the following manner:—Nunc laudare debemus auctorem regni cœlestis, potentiam Creatoris et consilium ejus, facta Patris gloriæ, quomodo ille, cum sit æternus Deus, omnium miraculorum Auctor extitit; qui primo filiis hominum cœlum pro culmine tecti, dehinc terram Custos humani generis omnipotens creavit. To this he adds, that his translation does not do justice to the elegance of the original.—See Bed. Hist. iv. c. 24.

The other specimen will be taken from the letter in which Cuthbert, the disciple of Beda, describes the last days of his master's life. For Beda, aware of the fatal nature of his disease, often spoke of it to his scholars, quoting sometimes passages from Scripture applicable to himself, sometimes from Anglo-Saxon poems, with which he was conversant—erat doctus in nostris carminibus. The following passage was of his own composition. By "need-fare" he understood the necessary departure from this world by death.

Fore tham neod-fare	Before the need-fare
Nenig wrytheth	None becometh
Thances snottra	Of thought more wise
Thonne him thearf sy,	Than is his need,
To ymbhycganne,	To search out,
Ær his heonan gang,	Ere his going hence,
Hwæt his gaste	What his spirit
Godes oththe yveles	For good or evil
Æfter death-dæge	After his death-day
Demed wurthe.	Doomed may be.

Quod, says the letter, ita Latine sonat: Ante necessarium exitum, prudentior quam opus fuerit, nemo existit; ad cogitandum videlicet, antequam hic proficiscatur anima, quid boni vel mali egerit, qualiter judicanda fuerit.

This translation was certainly unnecessary for the use of him, an Anglo-Saxon, to whom it was sent; and may, therefore, be considered as introduced into it afterwards in favour of those who did not understand the language. But there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the verses, which are found in several MSS. in England, and were discovered by Mr. Kemble in an almost contemporary MS. of the monastery of St. Gall in Switzerland. Mr. Stevenson has published them, from Mr. Kemble's copy, in his "Introduction to Beda's History" (p. xv.). I have employed the more modern spelling in Simeon of Durham, but have borrowed two readings from the MS. of St. Gall.

NOTE K (pp. 174, 182).

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES ON BEDA.

1. As early as the time of Malmesbury it was believed by many—and the same has been often asserted since—that Beda visited Rome, either at the invitation of Pope Sergius, who sought to avail himself of the talents and erudition of the Anglo-Saxon monk in the solution of certain difficult questions; or that, by submitting his works to the judgment of the Holy See, he might silence the clamour of his theological opponents. "This, however," says the historian, "is more than I will affirm; but one

thing is certain, that he was invited to Rome by Pope Sergius, and held in the highest estimation by that pontiff —Veruntamen quod Romæ fuerit, solide non affirmo; sed eum illuc invitatum fuisse haud dubie pronuncio; and, in proof, appeals to the papal letter itself.—De Reg. i. 85.

In this letter Sergius thanks the abbot Ceolfrith for the *present* which he had sent to him—*Benedictionis* gratiam, quam nobis per presentem portitorem tua misit devota religio, libenti et hilari animo, sicut ab ea directa est, nos suscepisse cognosce. He then hints in rather obscure terms at some petition which Ceolfrith had offered, and which he, the pontiff, had granted—dignis amplectendæ tuæ solicitudinis petitionibus faventes—and continues by observing that certain ecclesiastical questions had arisen lately, which demanded the aid of men of learning and research. Wherefore he exhorts Ceolfrith to send immediately to the presence of his lowliness, and to the thresholds of the prince-apostles Peter and Paul, his lords, and the lovers and protectors of Ceolfrith (whose monastery at Wearmouth was dedicated to St. Peter, and at Jarrow to St. Paul), the religious servant of God, the priest Beda, and to doubt not that God would hear his holy prayers, and conduct back to him his monk, as soon as the matters aforesaid should be fully accomplished —Absque ulla immoratione religiosum Dei famulum Bedam, venerabilis monasterii tui presbyterum, ad limina apostolorum principum, dominorum meorum, Petri et Pauli, amatorum tuorum et protectorum, ad nostræ mediocritatis conspectum non moreris dirigere, &c.—Ibid. pp. 86, 87.

With respect to this letter, it may be remarked, that in the beginning it notices two things, the present from Ceolfrith, and the grant of his petition. Now we learn from Beda, that Ceolfrith did send monks to Rome with a petition, which Sergius granted. He does not mention any present, but that would, according to the custom of the age, accompany the petition. Missis Romam monachis, tempore beatæ recordationis Sergii Papæ, privilegium ab eo pro tuitione sui monasterii, instar illius quod Agatho papa Benedicto dederat, accepit.—(Oper. Min. p. 155.) Hence, several have maintained with the highest probability, that it was by the bearer of this papal grant returning to Wearmouth that Sergius sent his letter to Ceolfrith.

On that account it becomes a question of some importance to ascertain in what year of his pontificate the monks of Wearmouth arrived in Rome; for Sergius was made pope in 687, when Beda was only fourteen, and died in 701, when Beda was not more than twenty-eight years old. Now we read of Hwetbert, who succeeded Ceolfrith as abbot, that he had been at Rome in the days of Pope Sergius, and had remained there a long while—Romam temporibus beatæ memoriæ Sergii Papæ accurrens, et non parvo ibidem temporis spatio demoratus, quæcumque sibi necessaria judicabat, didicit, descripsit, retulit.—(Bed. Oper. Min. p. 158.) Here we have no mention of the year; but from another work we learn that certain of the monks of Wearmouth were in Rome in 700, and did not leave it till 701, the very year in which Sergius died. Beda, having occasion in his work "De Temporum Ratione," to investigate the year of the Christian era in which Christ died, tells us that the brethren of his monastery who were in Rome, visited the church of St. Mary Major on Christmas-day (the first day of the year), 701, indiction xiv.; and that they read in the calendars inscribed on tablets of wax, and suspended in the vestibule, that 668 years had passed since the passion of Christ:—Anno ab ejus incarnatione juxta Dionysium septingentesimo primo, indictione quartadecima, fratres nostri qui tunc fuere Romæ, hoc modo se in natali Domini in cereis Sanctæ Mariæ scriptum vidisse, et inde descripsisse, referebant—'A passione Domini nostri Jesu Christi anni sunt DCLXVIII.'— (Bed. de Temp. Ratione, c. xlvii. vol. vi. p. 242.) Of this date there can be no doubt; both the number of the year and of the indiction agree. It is possible, indeed, that Hwetbert may have been in Rome at a more early period than the others, and have brought back the letter from Sergius; but the probability is, that both passages refer to the same time, and to the same company. Hwetbert was afterwards ordained priest in 704.

To return to the letter of Sergius: there cannot be a doubt that the request of the pontiff would be taken by Ceolfrith as a command; that to Beda himself it would offer an opportunity of satisfying his devotion by "worshipping at the thresholds of the apostles;" and that by both it must have been felt as a high distinction conferred on them

and their monastery. Still there is no reason to believe that any person availed himself of the invitation: it is certain that Beda did not, for he nowhere mentions it in his works,—that may indeed be attributed to his modesty; but he nowhere allows a word to escape him which could show that he had ever been in Rome. He often speaks of the churches, the relics, the persons, seen by others in their pilgrimages to the holy city; but never makes mention of any person or thing seen by himself. This alone would be sufficient; but, in addition, he tells us, two-and-thirty years after this time, that from the day on which he entered his monastery, he had never quitted it, unless it were to pay occasional visits in the neighbourhood. Cunctum ex eo tempus vitæ in ejusdem monasterii habitatione peregi.—Bed. Hist. l. v. c. 24.

But why, it will then be asked, was no attention paid to the letter of Sergius? If we adopt the less probable supposition that it was brought to England at a more early period by Hwetbert, it will be difficult to offer a satisfactory reason; but if the deputation of monks in 700 were the bearers, the cause is manifest. They left Rome in 701, how late in the year we know not—but Sergius died on the eighth of September; so that the intelligence of his death might perhaps arrive at Wearmouth as early as his letter. At all events the decease of the inviter sufficiently explains why no use was made of the invitation.

2. But here another question suggests itself. Was the Beda mentioned in the papal letter the same with Venerable Beda, the historian; or was he some other individual? For it should be recollected that Beda was not a solitary name, but probably common among the cœnobites of that age, as we read of Beda the elder, a priest attendant on St. Cuthbert (Oper. Min. p. 20); and the monastery of Wearmouth contained other learned men besides the deacon Beda, as appears from the character of Witmær, one of his fellow monks—veteranus et religiosus et in omni tam sæculari quam scripturarum scientia eruditus Christi famulus.—(Ibid. 156). I must own that it appears to me improbable that the Beda of the letter could be our Beda; 1st, because, unless we suspect the papal secretary, or his Anglo-Saxon transcriber, guilty of a most glaring error, the person

invited was already a priest—venerabilis monasterii tui presbyterum—yet Beda the historian was not then a priest, nor till two years after the death of Sergius: 2nd, because the person invited was one celebrated for his erudition; and it is difficult to conceive how Beda could have been honoured with such a character in Rome at a time when he had written no book, nor given any public proof of his learning and talents. It was only after his ordination to the priesthood that he began to write by order of his bishop and of his abbot.—Bed. Hist. l. v. c. 24.

3. There exists among the Cotton MSS. (Tiber. A. xv. fol. 6) a copy of the letter of Sergius, of great antiquity, in which both the name of the person sent for, and his designation as priest, deacon, or monk, are wanting. Whence the omission arose, we know not; probably the writer transcribed from a document which was so imperfect, or incorrect, or defaced, that he was unable to decipher the true reading, and therefore substituted the letter N for the name, passing by the designation altogether. This, however, has awakened in the mind of Mr. Stevenson (Introd. to Beda, p. x.) a suspicion, that the name and designation which we find in the copy left by Malmesbury are an interpolation by that historian. But Malmesbury's character ought to shelter him from any such imputation; and it is certainly as probable that he transcribed from a perfect copy, as from the copy now in the British Museum. At all events, in neither supposition have we any proof that Beda the historian was the person whose presence was required by Sergius: for in one case we have no name at all, in the other we have the name indeed, but with a designation appended to it which belongs not to him, but to some other individual in priest's orders.

4. We now proceed to Beda's age at the time of his death. It has been shown that he was born in 673; and the letter of Cuthbert proves, beyond the possibility of doubt, that he died in 735. Consequently, at the time of his death he must have nearly completed his sixty-second, or perhaps have entered on his sixty-third, year.

There is, however, an ancient writer, the anonymous author of the Life of Alcuin, who states that Beda died at the age of ninety. But when we recollect that this writer

was a foreigner, that he wrote on the Continent, and eighty years after the death of Beda, and that he assigns no other proof than the affirmation of some unknown persons—sicut aliquorum affirmatio est (Vit. Alc. c. ii. § 7), it must be plain that his testimony cannot be put in competition with the authority of Cuthbert.

Le Père Chifflet, in a dissertation prefixed to his edition of Beda's History (Paris, 1681), adopts the calculation of the last-mentioned writer. Chifflet admits indeed, on the authority of Cuthbert, that Beda died on the 26th of May, but not on the feast of the Ascension, because it is evident from Cuthbert's narrative, that he expired soon after sunset on the Wednesday in Rogation week, the day before the festival. Hence Chifflet was obliged to place the death of Beda in some year in which the Ascension fell on the twenty-seventh of May. Two offered themselves to his choice, the years 751 and 762. He preferred the latter, because it made the Anglo-Saxon about ninety years old, in accordance with the statement made by the biographer of Alcuin. It is hardly necessary to point out the source of this error. Chifflet was not aware that, according to the method of computation then in use, the festival began at the sunset on Wednesday.

But Baronius was not content with ninety years; he discovered that Beda was alive at the age of one hundred and four, and not alive only, but in the full possession of his faculties, and employed in writing scientific treatises for the instruction of his pupils. He was deceived by a passage in the letter of Beda to Wicrede, in which this learned monk lays down certain rules to discover both the day of the month and the day of the week on which the equinoctial moon will fall in any given year; and then, having taken for an example the year 776, works the problem according to his rules, and brings out a correct answer—Tuesday, the ninth of April. Now the printed copies make Beda write this in that very year—utpote anno præsenti 776—concurrentis anni præsentis.—(Bed. Oper. i. p. 162.) It might be said, that the word præsentis was added by some copyist, who supposed that Beda took for example the very year in which he was writing. A better solution is given by Mabillon, that the whole passage is an interpo-

lation, as he found it wanting in a valuable manuscript.—(Act. SS. Ben. sæc. iii. in Elog. Bed. No. 29.) Dr. Giles has lately renewed the inquiry, and found it wanting also in several other manuscripts.—(Oper. Bed. i. p. 275.) It appears then that the example and solution were added by some teacher in the year 776.

It may perhaps be asked, why Beda is commemorated in the ancient calendars on the 27th of May, if he died on the 26th. The answer is, that the 26th was already occupied by the name of St. Augustine of Canterbury. The next day was therefore chosen for the commemoration of Beda.

NOTE L (p. 192.)

EPITAPHIUM ALCWINI.

Hic, rogo, pauxillum veniens subsiste, viator,
Et mea scrutare pectore dicta tuo,
Ut tua deque meis cognoscas fata figuris ;
Vertitur en species, ut mea, sicque tua.
Quod nunc es, fueram, famosus in orbe viator :
Et quod nunc ego sum, tuque futurus eris.
Delicias mundi casso sectabar amore :
Nunc cinis et pulvis, vermibus atque cibus.
Quapropter potius animam curare memento,
Quam carnem : quoniam hæc manet, illa perit.
Cur tibi rura paras? Quam parvo cernis in antro
Me tenet hic requies, sic tua parva fiet.
Cur Tyrio corpus inhias vestirier ostro,
Quod mox esuriens pulvere vermis edet?
Ut flores pereunt vento veniente minaci,
Sic tua namque caro, gloria tota perit.
Tu mihi redde vicem, lector, rogo carminis hujus,
Et dic, da veniam, Christe, tuo famulo.
Obsecro nulla manus violet pia jura sepulchri,
Personet angelica donec ab arce tuba,
Qui jaces in tumulo, terræ de pulvere surge,
Magnus adest judex millibus innumeris.
Alchwin nomen erat sophiam mihi semper amanti,
Pro quo funde preces mente, legens titulum.

Hic requiescit beatæ memoriæ domnus Alchwinus abbas, qui obiit in pace xiii. Kalend. Junias. Quando legeritis, o

vos omnes, orate pro eo, et dicite: Requiem æternam donet ei Dominus.—This epitaph was incribed on a brass tablet fixed in the wall.—Vit. Alc. c. xv.

NOTE M (p. 221.)

ALFRED AND THE DECALOGUE.

As the twentieth chapter of the Book of Exodus begins with the decalogue, Alfred could not make an abridgment of that chapter without taking extracts from the decalogue. Now, though the Scripture speaks of the decalogue as the ten words of the law (Ex. xxxiv. 28), it nowhere points out the manner in which its prohibitory and preceptive clauses are to be divided, so as to make the exact number of ten commandments. Hence the manner of dividing them has always been a mere matter of opinion among Christians. Many, with St. Augustine, have reckoned the first three prohibitions as one commandment, because they have a common reference to the worship of the only true God; and these, to make up the number of ten, have divided the prohibition of concupiscence into two, making each branch of concupiscence the subject of a distinct commandment. Others, with St. Jerome, reckon the second and third prohibition as the second commandment, because both have reference to idolatrous worship; and these, that they may not exceed the number of ten, comprise the prohibition of both branches of concupiscence in one commandment. Among the Anglo-Saxons religious opinion on this question was perfectly free. Beda preferred the arrangement approved by St. Augustine, but at the same time did not condemn that which had been followed by St. Jerome:—"Primum mandatum pertinet ad Deum Patrem, dum dicit, Ego sum Dominus Deus tuus; non habebis deos alienos; non facies tibi sculptile, &c. Secundum pertinet ad Filium, ubi dicit, Non assumes nomen Dei tui in vanum. Nonum est, Non concupisces uxorem proximi tui. Decimum, Non concupisces rem proximi tui. Aut certe sic distinguendum, ut sit primum

mandatum, Non habebis deos alienos; secundum, Non facies tibi sculptile," &c.—Bed. Oper. ii. 130, 131.

It is plain that Alfred, in making his extracts, paid no attention to either of these divisions; not to that of St. Jerome, for he passed over the two prohibitions which, according to St. Jerome, form the second commandment; nor to that of St. Augustine, for he also passed over the prohibition of coveting a neighbour's wife, which, according to him, forms the ninth commandment. Now this last omission has escaped without animadversion; but the first has been considered as "leaving a foul blot on the character of Alfred." It has been described as an attempt on the part of the king to suppress the text of the decalogue, out of deference to Rome; because he could not reconcile the practice of Rome with the prohibition which the text conveyed. This important discovery was published to the world by Spelman (Con. 363, 4), and has since been repeated a hundred times by religious prejudice. "It has inflicted," says Mr. Soames, "a severe wound on Alfred's memory. His decalogue offers not a trace of the second commandment in its proper situation; a slight hint of it only is thrust down to the tenth place, and this is so worded as to give an iconolater ample room for subterfuge and evasion. Evidently, therefore, Anglo-Saxon divines reprobated no longer the second council of Nice, and Alfred was content to naturalize among his countrymen its insidious decrees."—Soames, Anglo-Saxon Church, p. 155.

Now on what proof is this imputation founded? On none whatsoever. It is a gratuitous assumption, invented to account for the absence of the prohibition of idol-worship. But it should be remembered that another prohibition is wanting, that of coveting a neighbour's wife. Why was that prohibition also omitted? The probable cause of both omissions will immediately suggest itself, if we recollect that Alfred was making, not a copy of the decalogue as his censors suppose, but an abridgment of the whole chapter, and would therefore pass by those passages the meaning of which was contained in other passages. Thus he would omit the two prohibitions respecting idol-worship, looking upon them as corollaries from the words, "Love thou not other strange gods above me;" and the

prohibition respecting adulterous concupiscence, as virtually included in the words, "Covet thou not thy neighbour's goods unjustly."

As little foundation is there for the assertion, that Alfred has "thrust a hint of the second commandment down to the tenth place, but in such language as to afford ample room for subterfuge." The prohibition, "Make not to thyself golden or silver gods," occupies in Alfred's abridgment the same place which it occupies in Scripture, and therefore cannot be considered a substitute for any other prohibition. It is moreover conveyed in the very language of Scripture, and therefore cannot be looked upon as evasive language adopted for the defence of iconolaters. On the contrary, it is a close and correct version of the very words in which God has forbidden iconolatria in Exodus xx. 23.

NOTE N (p. 226.)

ASSER.

Of Asser, the contemporary biographer of King Alfred, we have no other memorials than the few notices which may be gathered from the work that bears his name. In it he is described as a native of Wales, a relation of Novis, archbishop of St. David's, one of the prelates (perhaps chorepiscopi) of that church, in which he had been "educated, and tonsured, and ordained," and the holder of ecclesiastical property on both banks of the river Severn. The report of his erudition induced Alfred to invite him to the West Saxon court: he waited on the king at Dene in Sussex; and it was agreed between them that he should spend six months of each year in the service of Alfred in Wessex, and devote the other six to his duty in the church of St. David. To this arrangement Asser's brethren cheerfully consented, with the hope that the friendship of so powerful a monarch would check the insolence and tyranny of his vassal Hemeid, king of that portion of Wales. Asser performed his part of the contract, aiding the king in his study of the Latin language, and in his other literary pur-

suits; and was rewarded by him with the two monasteries of Ambresbury in Wiltshire, and Banwell in Somerset, and afterwards with the church of Exeter and "all the parish belonging to it in Saxony and Cornwall."

Asser appears to have composed his work in 893, when Alfred was in his forty-fifth year; and to have undertaken it in compliance with a promise (ut promisi, p. 40), which, it is probable, was made to his brethren of St. David's; for his language throughout is that of one writing in the character of a Welshman, and for the use of Welshmen. If he refer to any authority, it is to that of a foreign prince, the Saxon king, or of the nobles of that king; when he mentions places, he is careful to point out their position, or to explain their Saxon name in the Welsh or Latin tongue: the people of whom he writes are not his countrymen, but "Angul-Saxons," dwelling "in Saxony the right-hand part of Britain;" and the epithets which he generally applies to them, "illa gens, illa terra, illud regnum," shows that he, as well as those to whom he was writing, looked upon them as aliens in blood, in country, and in government.

The work itself is cast in a chronological form. The writer begins with the birth of Alfred in 849, and then narrates in order the principal events of each year, interweaving with them occasional notices of Alfred, his father and family, till he comes to the eighteenth year of the prince, when he suddenly seems aware that he has wandered from his subject, apologizes to his reader for having led him to so many scenes of battle and bloodshed, and undertakes to describe the infancy and the youth of his hero:—"Ne longius circumferamur inter tantas bellorum clades et annorum enumerationes, ad id quod nos maxime ad hoc opus incitavit, nobis redeundum esse censeo. Scilicet aliquantulum, quantum meæ cognitioni innotuit, de infantilibus et puerilibus domini mei, venerabilis Ælfredi Angulsaxonum regis, moribus in hoc loco inserendum esse existimo."—Asser, 25.

This subject, however, is soon dismissed, and the chronological form resumed, and continued during a second space of eighteen years: when the preceding apology is repeated, and an assurance is given, that he will now perform his promise, by describing the life and manners of Alfred

from the time of his marriage, which occurred in his twentieth year: — "Igitur, ut ad id unde digressus sum, redeam aliquantulum, quantum notitiæ meæ innotuerit, de vita et moribus et æqua conversatione, et ex parte non modica res gestas domini mei Alfredi . . . ut promisi, expedire procurabo."

At this place he introduces a most interesting episode respecting the marriage of Alfred, his family and their education, his eagerness in the pursuit of knowledge, and his attempts to draw learned men to his court from Mercia and Gaul, and Asser himself from Wales. A few more chronological entries follow; but in the year 887, he is reminded that Alfred began at that time to apply to the Latin language, which leads him into a long narrative, the particulars of which we should seek in vain elsewhere, of the king's course of study, his monastic establishments, his government of his kingdom, management of his finances, distribution of his alms, attention to the administration of justice, and solicitude to procure a literary education for the children of his principal thanes. These subjects conduct him to the very time in which he was writing, the forty-fifth year of the king's life. Of course he could then proceed no further; but the abrupt manner in which his narrative terminates here, proves that he intended to continue it on some future occasion. Whether he executed this intention afterwards, we are ignorant; if he did, the continuation has been lost.

It should moreover be observed, that the chronological entries in Asser's work bear a striking resemblance to the corresponding entries in the Saxon Chronicle. The former are indeed more full; they manifest a more intimate acquaintance with the court of Wessex, and with the fortunes of its princes; but they are frequently the same in substance, and occasionally so nearly identical in matter and manner, that it is impossible not to see that either one of the two writers translated from the other, or that both drew from one common source. The latter appears to me the more probable supposition. It is also certain that Asser was a bishop. Alfred, in his letter to Wulfsige, calls him his bishop, as he calls Plegmund his archbishop (Ærcepiſcmunum bircope; Wise, p. 85). He could not, however, have been bishop of

Sherborne at that time; for this very letter was written to Wulfsige bishop of Sherborne, and both Wulfsige and Asser subscribe as bishops to undoubted charters of King Edward in 903 and 904.—(Cod. Dipl. ii. pp. 144, 148.) My own notion is, that when "Exeter with all its parish in Saxony and Cornwall" was given to Asser, he became bishop of the western portion of the diocese of Sherborne, which at that time reached to the Land's End—a partition which probably was made because the natives of Cornwall would more readily obey the authority of a Briton than of a Saxon. If we suppose that, on the death of Wulfsige, Asser succeeded to the other portion of the diocese, we shall then explain why in the ancient catalogue, quoted by Mr. Wright, he is said to have succeeded Wulfsige, and in the Saxon Chronicle to have died bishop of Sherborne.

I have entered into this detail, that the reader may be the better able to judge of a question which has lately been raised by Mr. Wright, in his "Biographia Britannica Literaria" (i. p. 408), whether the work attributed to Asser was in reality written by that prelate, or by any one contemporary with Alfred. The doubt was first suggested to him by the difficulty just mentioned of finding a bishopric in Wessex for Asser: and subsequently so many other difficulties presented themselves to his mind, that he is tempted to pronounce the work a fabrication by some obscure monk, who lived probably in the eleventh century. The chief of these difficulties are the following:—

1. That we know not where Asser's bishopric could exist.

2. That there appears no reason why a man in the position of Asser should have written the Life of Alfred when that king was in his forty-fifth year; and still less why its author, who is said to have survived Alfred nine years, did not complete it afterwards.—Id. p. 408.

3. How is it possible to believe that the education of the favourite child of Ethelwulf should have been neglected, as Asser is made to assert, or that he should want teachers in a court where Swithun was the domestic adviser?—p. 409.

4. How could the writer quote the authority of King Alfred for the story of the West-Saxon Queen Eadburge,

when he could not be ignorant that it was well known to every West-Saxon? (p. 409).

5. The author evidently contradicts himself. He asserts that Alfred laboured under a painful disease from the time of his marriage till his *fortieth year*, when he was miraculously freed from it by praying to St. Neot, and never suffered a relapse; and yet in another page he says that the king still suffered from it in his forty-fifth year, and had never been freed from it for a full hour at a time (p. 410).

6. He plainly made use of the written Life of St. Neot, for he quotes from it. Now there is great reason to believe that the Life of St. Neot was never written till after the translation of his relics in 974, above sixty years after the death of Asser. Id. p. 416.

Now it should be remembered that it is on the work attributed to Asser that the reputation of Alfred is founded. Destroy *its* credit, and *his* fame is gone. You may perhaps learn from others a few particulars respecting his life, and his perpetual struggle with the Danes for the independence of his country; but it is to the pages of Asser alone that his panegyrists, both ancient and modern, resort for the leading traits in his character, his domestic policy, his ardour in the pursuit of learning, and his efforts for the improvement of his people. On this account I may be allowed to inquire, whether the premises set forth by Mr. Wright warrant the conclusion which he seeks to draw from them.

1. The first difficulty has been already answered, by the supposition that Asser was first bishop of the western portion of the diocese of Sherborne, and succeeded, on the death of Wulfsige, to the remaining portion. But it has, in reality, no connection whatever with the inquiry into the authenticity of the work attributed to Asser, because that work nowhere states that Asser was a bishop.

2. Asser tells us that he wrote in the forty-fifth year of Alfred's age, anno 893, and at the request of persons whom the context shows to have been his countrymen, natives of Wales. Now, if it be considered that Asser stood high in the esteem and confidence of Alfred, and that the authority of that monarch was acknowledged, and his favour courted by almost all the chieftains of Wales, what was there so very extraordinary in the request on the one part, or in the

willingness of Asser to comply with it on the other? He continued his narrative to the day on which he was writing: and further he could not go at that time, a sufficient reason why it should terminate, as it does, in the forty-fifth year of Alfred's life. But, if you suppose with Mr. Wright, that the work is a fabrication of the eleventh century, what possible reason can there be assigned, why the forger, writing above one hundred years after the king's death, should be content with the narrative of a portion only of his life, when he might as easily have framed an account of the last six years as of any which preceded them? To the second part of the question it is sufficient to reply, that many a man has written part of an intended work, and then laid it by, without ever resuming it.

3. The complaint which Asser puts into Alfred's mouth, that there were no good teachers (boni lectores, p. 17) in Wessex, when he was young, is nothing more than what the king himself has stated in his letter to Wulfsige: "So few were they who could declare forth an epistle out of Latin into English, that I cannot think of a single one to the south of the Thames, when I began to reign.—Wright, Bib. i. 398.

4. Asser was perfectly aware that the story of Eadburge was well known to Alfred's subjects; for he tells us that the king learned it from the testimony of many, several of whom reported it from their own recollection—"a veredicis multis referentibus, immo ex parte non modica illud factum commemorantibus."—(Ass. p. 10.) But the persons who, according to Asser, were ignorant of it, were not West-Saxons, but the Welshmen to whom he was writing.

5. The reasoning drawn from Asser's account of Alfred's disease is founded on a mistake. There were two maladies existing at different times, which Mr. Wright has made into one. Alfred was afflicted with one of them in early youth: "*Ficum*, genus infestissimi doloris, ab infantia habuit;" and from this he was relieved, after he had prayed in the church of St. Guerye: "Oratione finita, se ab illo dolore medicatum esse divinitus sensit, ita ut funditus eradicaretur" (p. 40). But afterwards, about the time of his marriage, in his twentieth year, he was suddenly seized with a different and most painful disease, from which he had

never been free, except at short intervals, even at the time when Asser wrote: "*Eo amoto, alius* infestior in nuptiis eum arripuit, qui a vigesimo ætatis suæ anno usque ad quadragesimum quintum eum incessabiliter fatigavit (p. 42), usque ad quadragesimum quintum, quem nunc agit" (p. 58). Assuredly there is no contradiction here.

6. It is plain that Mr. Wright is ignorant when the Life of St. Neot was originally written; John of Glastonbury says by a contemporary. But admitting that it was of much later date, do the references to that life in our present copies of the work of Asser necessarily lead to the conclusion which Mr. Wright has drawn from them? It is certainly unlikely that Asser, writing in 893, should at that time refer to a Life of St. Neot; but it is equally unlikely that a forger, writing about two centuries afterwards, should introduce so palpable a proof of his own dishonesty. Nor is it difficult to assign a sufficient reason for the existence of these interpolations, if we suppose that the copy, through which the work has come down to us, was written by a monk of St. Neot's or of some neighbouring monastery, not for the purpose of publication, as books are published now, but for the use of his own brethren. In that case it would naturally occur to him to introduce such notices as, "Ubi sanctus Neotus nunc pausat," and "et, ut in vita sancti patris Neoti legitur, apud quemdam suum vaccarium," without any intention to deceive, or any suspicion that he would thereby throw doubt on the authenticity of the original work.

On the whole, five of the difficulties suggested by Mr. Wright appear to me to be imaginary; the last is susceptible of the explication just given, and therefore cannot be of sufficient weight to deprive Asser of his claim to a work which has gone under his name for eight centuries, and which bears indisputable evidence of having been written by a foreign scholar, high in the confidence and frequently resident in the court of King Alfred; such, in fact, as Asser represents himself to have been.

NOTE O (p. 228).

ON ANGLO-SAXON MONEY.

Each æstel, which Alfred sent with his work, was "of fifty mancuses"—on fiftigum mancyssa (Wise's Asser, p. 86); and the mancus was an ounce and a half, or the eighth part of a pound. But it should be observed that the monetary pound of the Anglo-Saxons differed from that which was afterwards introduced by the Normans. The monk of Ely remarks, of a payment in gold, that it was made "according to the great pound of the Normans,"—juxta magnum pondus Normannorum.—(Hist. Elien. p. 506.) The Anglo-Saxon pound is believed to have been that known by the name of the Tower pound; the Norman was the Troy pound, heavier by three-quarters of an ounce than the former. Hence each of Alfred's æstels must have been equal in weight, or it may be in price, to six Anglo-Saxon pounds and three ounces of silver.

In the course of these pages the reader will have met with mention, not of mancuses only, but of marks, ores, shillings, and pence. On that account he will not, perhaps, think it amiss, if in the present note I add some remarks on the several denominations of Anglo-Saxon money.

Of these, the lowest in value was the Styca, a small ill-fashioned coin of copper in combination with several other metals. In the Anglo-Saxon version of the Gospels we read (Mark xii. 42), that the poor widow offered two stycas; to which the translator adds, "that is, the fourth part of a penny." The expression is ambiguous, as it may refer to the value of only one styca, or the value of the whole offering. But all doubt is removed by the parallel passage in St. Luke, which states the whole offering to have amounted to two "feorthlings" or farthings. Hence it follows that the value of the styca was the one-fourth of a penny.

Hoards of stycas, amounting to some thousands, have been discovered in the ground in different places: at Ripon

in 1695, at Kirk Oswald in 1808, at Hexham in 1833, and still more recently at York; all within the ancient kingdom of Northumbria. It is not known that any styca has ever been found in any other of the Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. There is reason, however, to believe that this coin was formerly in use among the Jutes of Kent, under the denomination of *sceat*, a generic term for money, from ſceoττan to pay; as ſcute ælc man hiſ ſcil, Let every man shoot or pay his shilling (Thorpe, Laws, &c. i. 230), and still retained among us under the form of "shot." Now it is plain, from the comparison of different laws enacted by Ethelbert, the first Christian king (Nos. 54, 55, with Nos. 70, 71, 72; Thorpe, pp. 16, 20), that twenty Kentish sceats were in value one shilling; whence it will follow that these sceats were singly worth the fourth or fifth part of a penny. It is, indeed, possible that they may have been of silver, or merely money of account; but from their agreement in value with the Northumbrian styca, it is probable that they resembled them in weight and metal.

Before we proceed to the silver coinage, it should be noticed that the multitude of mints established in the several kingdoms offered great facility to the issue of light and base money. To remedy the evil, it had been ordered, at a very early period, that every moneyer should stamp his name on the coin issued from his mint, and thus make himself responsible for its purity and weight. But this regulation was easily defeated. Counterfeit dies were procured; workshops were established in wilds and forests; and from them false money, bearing the stamp of a legitimate moneyer, was poured into circulation.—(See Athelstan's Dooms, Thorpe, i. 301.) But as soon as the several crowns were firmly united on the same head, more stringent measures were adopted. "We ordain," says Athelstan, "that there be one money over all the king's dominion, and that no man mint but within port. And if the moneyer be guilty, let the hand be struck off with which he wrought the offence, and be set up on the money smithy." "Let every moneyer," adds Ethelred, "who is accused of striking false money, since it was forbidden, go to the threefold ordeal [in case that he could not clear himself], and if it be foul, let him be slain. And let no man have a moneyer except the king;

and the moneyers who work within a wood or elsewhere shall be liable with their lives, unless the king will be merciful to them."—(Id. 296, 298.) It was added to this, that the fabricators of false dies, and the dealers in false money, were as criminal as the forgers, and should suffer the same penalty.—Id. 301.

This enactment, with several others of a similar tendency, shows that there was an abundance of false money in circulation among the Anglo-Saxons; whence we may with great probability number among such money many coins, which have found their way into the cabinets of collectors, distinguished from the rest by rudeness of workmanship, baseness of metal, and deficiency in weight.

The silver coins were the sceat and the penny. Those which are called sceats vary greatly in weight, but generally range from fifteen to nineteen grains Troy, some of pure, and some of very debased metal. They come to us from Northumbria, East Anglia, and Kent. It is singular that we have none from the Angles of Mercia: for it is certain that sceats were once the current coin of that people, since the weregild of the king was 30,000 sceats. "This sum," says Athelstan, "is equal to one hundred and twenty pounds" (Thorpe, i. 190); a calculation which gives two hundred and fifty sceats to a pound of silver. If this were so, the Mercian sceat was a sort of lighter penny, the difference between them being only the twenty-fifth part of the legitimate penny.

The penny itself was the two hundred and fortieth part of a pound, and therefore, if that pound were, as is stated before, the Tower pound, ought to have weighed about $22\frac{1}{2}$ grains Troy. It is supposed to have been the national coin of the West Saxons, and we find it repeatedly mentioned about the end of the eighth century in the laws of Ine, as if it was the coin in which payments were generally made. Yet we have no undisputed penny of the West Saxon princes before the accession of Egbert, a century later than the reign of Ine,—a proof that we cannot form a correct notion of the time when the penny was first introduced among the other nations from the dates of such coins as have come down to us.

For the convenience of trade it was necessary to have

still smaller coins; on which account the penny was occasionally clipped into two halves, called hæflings or half-pennies, and these again into two other halves, called feorthlings or farthings. In this state they have often been found among hoards of pennies, and sometimes as fresh as if the clipping had taken place immediately after they were issued from the mint.

In the treasure discovered in Cuerdale, on the 15th of May, 1840, were several small circular coins of St. Edmund of East Anglia, and of King Alfred, and one of his son, Edward the Elder. They weighed about eight grains each. Those of Alfred were exact copies of his pennies, bearing the same impression as the penny, and weighing exactly one-third of the penny. Are they not then the coin mentioned twice in his laws, as the third deal or part of the penny—þriddan dæl penincaf—and in the Latin version in the laws of Henry I. the triens with the same meaning? —Thorpe, i. 94, 98.

According to law, no man could refuse the lawful coin in payment; on which account, in monetary transactions, the pennies were ordinarily reckoned by tale or number. As, however, they were frequently deficient in quantity of silver, it was sometimes agreed among the parties, sometimes required by the custom of the place, that payments should be made by weight (ad pensum), or by an addition to the number, of one penny to every four (xx. in ora; see later). Moreover, to guard against loss through the debasement of the coin by the admixture of baser metal, it was customary, at least in payments to the crown, to melt a sample taken from the money offered, and from the result of the assay to calculate the value of the whole sum—(arsas et pensatas, adarsuram et pensum).—Domesd. i. f. 16. Madox, Hist. of Exchcq. ii. 377.

II. From the coinage we now proceed to moneys of account. The pound was in universal use among the Saxons, Angles, and Danes settled in the island: the shilling common to the Saxons and Angles only, but of different value with each: the thrymsa peculiar to some tribes of the Angles. In addition, the mark, ore, and mancus, although of Danish origin, became, before the Norman conquest, naturalized among all the three races.

1. The Saxon shilling contained five pennies, and was the forty-eighth part of the pound. This is proved from Ælfric, who tells us that—ꝑꝛ penınȝaꝛ ȝemacıȝað ænne ȝcıllınȝe—five pennies make one shilling.—Ælf. Gram. p. 52.

In the laws of Alfred the different wounds which may be inflicted on the human body are enumerated, and to each is affixed a pecuniary compensation proportionate to the injury.—(Thorpe, i. 92.) Now the whole chapter with the same compensations is introduced into the laws of Henry I.; but the Norman lawyer, in whose time the word shilling denominated twelve pennies, frequently admonishes his reader that the shillings mentioned by him are shillings of five pennies. For example—

According to Ine, the manbote (Thorpe, i. 147), according to Edward the Elder, the healsfang (ib. p. 157), for one whose *were* was 1200 shillings, amounted to 120 shillings. Now in the laws of Henry I. we read that the 120 shillings made only fifty shillings according to the computation then in use—qui faciunt hodie solidos quinquaginta (ib. 581).—Hence it is plain that they were shillings of five pennies. In effect $120 \times 5 = 600$, and $50 \times 12 = 600$.

I will add another instance: by the laws of Ethelred (ib. 342), and of Canute (ib. 361), the grithbrice, the penalty for violating the peace of a church of the

1st class	was	5 pounds	=	240	shillings	=	1200 pennies.
2nd	„	½ of 5	=	120	„	=	600 „
3rd	„	¼	=	60	„	=	300 „
4th	„	⅛	=	30	„	=	150 „

Now in the laws of Henry I. the same penalty is stated thus (ib. 585):—

1st class	was	5 pounds	=	100	shillings	=	1200 pennies.
2nd	„	½	=	50	„	=	600 „
3rd	„	¼	=	25	„	=	300 „
4th	„	⅛	=	12s 6d.		=	150 „

In both statements the real amount of the fines is the same; the only difference is in the sum denoted by the word shillings, which in the first are shillings of five, in the second are shillings of twelve, pennies.

Hence it follows that under Henry I. the same pecuniary compensations were enforced as under the Saxon

kings, and contained the same number of pennies of the same value.

According to the laws of Pepin and Charlemagne, the French pound contained, like the English pound, two hundred and forty pennies, but was divided into twenty shillings only, being shillings of twelve pennies ench.—(Du Fresne, Gloss. 894. Mabil. Sæc. iv. Bened. præf. i. p. cxi.) Hence it should cause no surprise if, after the Norman conquest, we find shillings of twelve pennies mentioned in our national writers. It is, however, a question whether this shilling was not also in use in the Anglo-Saxon times; for, in the laws of Alfred we find the sum of sixty-six shillings and sixpence and the third of a penny fixed as compensation for the loss of an eye, which, it is said, would have been sixty-seven shillings one penny and a third of a penny, if the shilling had been a shilling of five pennies. But this argument will weigh little with those who know how fond the Saxons were of the repetition of the same numerals. Besides, it has been suggested by Mr. Price that the true reading should be sixty-six shillings and three pennies and the third of a penny—that being one-third of the were of two hundred shillings.

Again, in Ælfric's version of the Pentateuch (Exod. xxi. 10) we are told that the woman's dower is twelve shillings of twelve pence each—þa ꝛinð ꝺpelf ꝛcillinȝaf be ꝺpelf peniȝon—but as this passage is no part of the sacred text, and has plainly been superadded as a note, it may with great probability be ascribed to some copier after the Conquest. In the compilation called the Laws of Edward the Confessor, we meet also with shillings of twelve pennies (see Thorpe, i. p. 454, xxvii.); but that compilation was made under the Norman sway; and the same may be said of the monk of Ely, who wrote at a still later period.

2. But, though the shilling of Wessex, which was called "the head of the empire and of the laws"—quæ caput est regni et legum (Thorpe, i. 572, 593)—was the forty-eighth part of the pound, and denoted five pennies, the shilling of the Mercians, who were Angles, was only the sixtieth part of a pound, and therefore denoted only four pennies.

We learn from the Mercian law on Wer-gilds (Thorpe, i. 190), that the wer-gild of a ceorl was two hundred shillings;

of a thane, six times that of a ceorl, or twelve hundred shillings; of the king, six times that of a thane, or one hundred and twenty pounds. Hence it follows that one hundred and twenty pounds were equal to seven thousand two hundred shillings, and that one pound was equal to sixty shillings. There is also an undisputed charter of Ethelbert, king of Wessex, but regarding a place in Kent, and consequently out of Wessex, in which he states that a certain yearly service due to the crown may be redeemed "by the payment of half a pound, that is, of thirty shillings"—xxx. argenteis, hoc est, semi cum libra, redimatur.—(Cod. Dipl. ii. 75.) Of course the pound there must have contained sixty shillings.

Now if sixty shillings make a pound, four pennies will make the shilling: for $60 \times 4 = 240$; and we learn from the laws of the Conqueror that such in reality was the case —xv sol de sol Engleis, que est apele quaer denier—v sol de souz Engleis—en sols Engleis.—(Thorpe, i. 472, 484.) Hence some have supposed, that the Saxon shilling of five pennies had fallen into disuse: but that certainly was not the case. The Conqueror here confirms the laws of the Mercians, who were Angles, and therefore speaks of their shilling by the name of the shilling English. And such appears to have been the shilling in Kent, whether it was so originally, or only after the subjugation of Kent by the Mercians.

3. We meet in the laws with three divisions of the Angles,—into North Angles, South Angles, and Mid-Angles. The last of these were accustomed to compute by thrymsas, a word evidently derived from ƿɲ or ƿɲy, and meaning accordingly three pennies. That such was the real value of the thrymsa may be deduced from the wer-gild of the ceorl, which is stated to have been "two hundred and sixty-six thrymsas, equal to two hundred shillings among the Mercians."—(Thorpe, i. 186.) Now two hundred Mercian shillings, sols Engleis, contained eight hundred pennies; and two hundred and sixty-six thrymsas, at three pennies each, contain seven hundred and ninety-eight pennies. The deficiency is only of two pennies, which, in so large a sum, would be overlooked by the legislator for the sake of a round number.

4. The ore, a money of account of Danish origin, appears for the first time in the convention between Edward and Guthrum (Thorpe, i. 168): but as the power of the Danes continued to increase, computation by the ore became common in every part of the country. Its value was sixteen pennies, or the fifteenth part of a pound. Thus Ethelred ordered the portreeve to watch the moneyers, and to take care that their weights corresponded with the weights at which money was received at the treasury, and that they should be stamped so that *fifteeen ore* should make *one pound* —et omne pondus sit marcatum ad pondus, quo pecunia mea recipitur, et eorum singulum signetur, ita quod xv. oræ libram faciant.—(Thorpe, i. 303.) Hence it is plain that sixteen pennies made an ore, at least in Wessex.—(Thorpe, i. 303. See also Spelman, Gloss. voce ora, and Wilkins, Gloss. voce Hustinos, and Twisden, Gloss. ad X. Scriptores.) The registry of Burton assigns to it the same value when it tells us that twenty ores were equal to two marks (Gib. Camd. i. 130); for two marks were three hundred and twenty pennies, and $16 \times 20 = 320$. It should, however, be observed that in Domesday we meet not only with payments in ores, which we may therefore take to be the customary ores already mentioned (c. sol. et v. oras. Dom. i. 64 b. Molen. de vii. oris, p. 174; vii. lib. ii. oras et ii. den. p. 189), but also with payments in ores of twenty pennies to the ore (lib. de xx. den. in ora. Dom. i. 164), which have generally been explained to mean of twenty pennies to the *ounce*. But why in that case should the expression be adopted at all? The same was true of every other payment. The pound always consisted of twelve ounces, and the ounce of twenty pennies. It should, however, be observed that these payments of twenty pennies in the ore were confined to payments to the king from his own manors,—and not from all, but only from a very few even of them. The first entry of the kind informs us that the rent of the manor of Tarentefort (probably Dartford), in Kent, was paid in three several parcels; the first parcel consisted of seventy pounds of silver by weight, the second of 111 shillings of twenty pennies in the ore, and the third of seven pounds, and twenty-six pennies by tale (lxx. libras pensatas, et cxi. solid. de den. xx. in ora, et vii. lib. xxvi.

den. ad numerum.—Dom. i. 2 b.). Whence these different customs arose in the payment of rent from the same manor cannot probably be ascertained; but it is evident that the payment of twenty in the ore, equivalent to the addition of one-fourth to the ordinary ore, is a different kind of payment from the other two. Perhaps it may have been introduced to compensate for the deficiency of the current coin, in weight or purity.

5. The mancus was the eighth part of the pound. Ælfric, having told us that five pennies make a shilling, adds, and thirty pennies a mancus—and þrittiȝ peniȝa ænne mancr.—(Elf. Gram. apud Somn. 52, 8.) In the laws of Henry I. it is said that thirty shillings of five pennies make five mancuses (Thorpe, i. 537, c. 34), and that twelve common shillings and six pence make also five mancuses.—(Ib. p. 581, c. 76.) In each quotation the mancus is taken for thirty pennies; for $5 \times 30 = 150$, and $12\frac{1}{2} \times 12 = 150$.

Again, twenty mancuses are said to make fifty shillings (ib. 538); now $20 \times 30 = 600$ pennies, $50 \times 12 = 600$. It may be observed, that the earliest mention of the mancus in the laws occurs in the convention between Alfred and Guthrum.—Thorpe, i. 154.

6. There has been much doubt respecting the real value of the Anglo-Saxon mark. By Spelman (Gloss. voce Marca), it is said to have been at one period equal to no more than two pennies. But he was deceived by a law of Edward the Confessor, the true meaning of which may be discovered from a parallel law of William the Conqueror.—(Compare Thorpe, 446, x., with 474, xvii.) Other writers have pronounced the mark to be the same sum with the mancus; and in many passages, particularly in the laws of Henry I., these two denominations appear to be used indiscriminately. But this should be ascribed to the negligence of the copyists, who easily confounded words so similar to each other as marca and manca, mr. and mn. At an early period after the Conquest, the mark was two-thirds of a pound, at which value it was called on the Continent the English mark (Du Fresne, Gloss. p. 438), and there is every reason to believe it to have been the same under the Saxon princes. This I shall endeavour to prove, by showing that the latter computation agrees, the former disagrees, with

the relative value of the sums mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon laws.

In the convention between Alfred and Guthrum, the life of an English and a Danish thane is declared to be of equal value; and the compensation for each is said to be eight half-marks of gold: that is, if the mark was two-thirds of a pound, thirty-two ounces; if, like the mancus, one eighth, six ounces—(i. 152). This law was re-enacted under Ethelred and Henry I., but, in lieu of eight half-marks of gold, was substituted twenty-five pounds in silver, most probably a sum of equal value.—(Thorpe, i. 154, 286, 573; ii. 513.*) Now taking this for granted, it will follow that, if the first hypothesis be correct, thirty-two ounces of gold were worth three hundred ounces of silver,—nearly in the ratio of one to ten; if the second, that six ounces of gold was worth three hundred ounces of silver, in the ratio of fifty to one. But the latter conclusion is contradicted by the well-known fact that the value of gold over silver did not rise to the ratio of ten to one before the reign of King John.

Another proof is furnished by the laws attributed to Edward the Confessor, in which the manbote to be paid to the king or archbishop, for the murder of one of his retainers, was three marks; to a bishop or earl, forty-eight shillings of five pennies, equal to twenty of twelve; to a thane, twenty-four of five pennies, or ten of twelve.—(Thorpe, i. 447.) Supposing the mark to be two-thirds of a pound, three marks are ninety-six shillings of five pennies, and forty of twelve. That this is the true value of the three marks, will appear from the gradual diminution of the manbote in geometrical proportion.

	MARKS.		SHILL. OF 5.		SHILL. OF 12.
King's manbote	3	=	96	=	40
Bishop's manbote	$\frac{1}{2}$	=	48	=	20
Thane's manbote	$\frac{1}{4}$	=	24	=	10

Hence I conclude that the Anglo-Saxon mark was two-thirds of the pound, or one hundred and sixty pennies.

* In Mr. Thorpe's edition, Ethelred's law has xxx. pounds for xxv. This probably is an error of the transcriber or printer: for all other editions in Saxon, as well as the versio antiqua, have xxv., a reading confirmed by the Laws of Henry I., p. 573.

We meet in Domesday with a few entries of marks and *half*-marks, both of gold and silver.—(Dom. i. 23, 217, 286 b. 287 b. 345 b.) It is probable that calculations were often made in half-marks by preference, because they were aliquot parts of the pound, which the mark was not.

The Saxon money may therefore be reckoned as follows:—

			PENNIES.
The pound	1	=	240
The mark	$\frac{2}{3}$	=	160
The mancus	$\frac{1}{8}$	=	30
The ora	$\frac{1}{15}$	=	16
The greater shilling	$\frac{1}{20}$	=	12
The common shilling	$\frac{1}{48}$	=	5
The Mercian shilling	$\frac{1}{60}$	=	4
The thrymsa	$\frac{1}{80}$	=	3
The penny	$\frac{1}{240}$	=	1

But payments were not always made in the current coin, or silver pennies. Both gold and silver, wrought or unwrought, were often substituted by the parties. In a charter by King Bertulf of Mercia, we meet with the bishop Heabert, and the abbot Earmund, making up the sum specified with a ring of gold of thirty mancuses, a dish of silver worth three pounds, two stoops worth two pounds, a gilt cup worth two pounds, and a drinking-vessel beautifully wrought, and ornamented with gold.—(Cod. Dipl. ii. pp. 8, 31.) In the treasure hoarded in Cuerdale, were found several ingots of silver, about three inches and one-tenth in length, all cast in similar moulds, and weighing on an average eight ounces and one quarter. Some bore on the flat surface a large cross in relief; others were perfectly plain. There can hardly be a doubt that these ingots were intended to represent the mark, or one-third of a pound. With them were found a multitude of smaller pieces, fragments of bars, armlets, and silver ornaments, adjusted apparently with a chisel, and corresponding in weight with the several divisions of the pound, or the mark. The probability is, that these also were intended to be used in payments.

It should moreover be remembered that gold was abundant among the Anglo-Saxons, probably the fruit of the

piracies and invasions of their ancestors. This abundance is evident from its relative value to silver which has been mentioned already; from the magnificence displayed in the churches, in altars covered with plates of gold, chalices and flagons of gold, crosses of gold, one of which weighed one hundred mancuses (Edd. p. 60. Oper. Alc. ii. p. 256, 550. Hist. Rames. p. 403. Hist. Elien. p. 514); in their arms ornamented with gold, their cups and drinking-vessels of gold, and their rings, bracelets, collars, bands, and trinkets of gold.—(See the will of Beorhtric and his wife Alfswythe in Cod. Dipl. ii. 380.) Hence it frequently happened, that in larger payments, gold was given and received together with the silver. We meet with many entries like to the following—seven pounds of gold and silver—denoting as much gold and silver as equalled in value the sum of seven pounds in silver coin (Cod. Dipl. i. 253); forty pounds in gold and silver (ibid. ii. 34); eighty mancuses of the purest gold, and six pounds of chosen silver (ibid. 410).

Other payments were made in gold alone; and it would appear from the language used, that it was often assayed before it was taken. Thus we meet with "400 mancuses of the purest gold" (ibid. 75), "120 mancuses of the purest gold" (ibid. 101), "sixty mancuses of clean gold" (ibid. 111), "120 mancuses of the finest gold" (ibid. 306).

Into whatever shape the gold had been formed,—into rings, chains, goblets, &c., it was taken in payment by weight, sometimes by the pound, generally by the mancus, or the one-eighth of a pound: thus we find mention of a gold ring having—habens—seventy-five mancuses (ibid. i. 273); and a goblet of gold weighing—pensans—thirty mancuses (ibid. ii. 137). Thus we find that Æthelstan, the eldest son of King Ethelred, bought three estates in land of his father, for one of which he gave 200 mancuses of gold by weight—be ȝeþihc—with five pounds of silver; and for each of the other, 250 mancuses of gold, also by weight—be ȝeþihc.—(See his will, No. 5, in the charters at the end of Lye's Dictionary.) Thus also Edward the Elder paid a mancus of gold, according to the standard weight—publico pondere—for every foot of land that he took from the church of Winchester

for the offices of the monks (Malm. de Pont. p. 130); and a bishop, in the History of Ramsey, having collected a sufficiency of gold plate in the course of the night, paid it the next morning according to his promise, and by standard weight—promissam fulvi massam metalli publico pondere pensitavit.—Hist. Ram. 442.

Many articles of gold, thus passing in the place of money, were of extraordinary weight. We meet with a ring or band of gold, for the waist, of seventy-five mancuses (Cod. Dipl. i. 273), and a sweor-beah, a chain or necklace of gold, of eighty mancuses, equal to ten pounds Troy (ibid. ii. 380); ornaments so cumbersome and inconvenient, that they probably were made for show rather than wear. In Ireland, gold rings of considerable weight have been found. Sir William Betham had in his possession a ring weighing thirty-six ounces, and assures us that Vallancey had one of fifty-six (Transactions of Roy. Ir. Acad. xvii. p. 13); but the largest of these is not half the weight of several of the Saxon rings.

It may, perhaps, be thought, from the language of some of the preceding entries, that the mancus was a coin of gold, in the same manner as the penny was one of silver. But no such conclusion can be drawn from that language, because the same is frequently employed in speaking of shillings and pounds of silver, which we know were not coins, but merely moneys of account; as three hundred shillings in silver—ccctorum solidorum in argento (Cod. Dipl. ii. 61); "ten pounds of silver"—x libris argenti (ibid. 25); "fifteen hundred shillings of gold and silver"—mille quingentis solidis argenti et auri, vel quindecies centum siclis.—Ibid. p. 93.

Moreover, if the mancus had been a coin, the number of mancuses in circulation must have been immense. We meet with them continually in payments, and often to the amount of several hundreds. How comes it then, if the mancus had been a gold coin, that no such coin has come down to us? that not one has ever been known to exist among the coins which have frequently been found to the number of thousands in a single hoard? The depositors of these hoards were plainly wealthy individuals, who concealed their money for security, and must have been as

anxious to secure their gold as their silver or copper coin. These hoards were buried in the earth at different times from the eighth to the beginning of the twelfth century; and the absence of any gold coin from the whole of them furnishes a convincing proof that the Anglo-Saxon coinage was confined to the other metals, that is, copper and silver.

It will be no answer to this reasoning, to appeal to the celebrated Mohammedan dinar, bearing the name of "Offa Rex" in Anglo-Saxon letters. It cannot be supposed that a coin proclaiming Mahomet the apostle of God, though in the Arabic language, would ever be allowed to circulate in any Christian country. The date of the dinar (157 of the Hegira, 774 of Christ), agrees, indeed, with the reign of Offa; but I should attribute the coin to a Mohammedan moneyer in some of the ports of Spain or Syria, by whom it might be struck to gratify the vanity, or to delude the ignorance, of Anglo-Saxon pilgrims or traders in the Mediterranean.

Neither can any argument be drawn from the language of the monk, the writer of the "Historia Eliensis," who always, in relating the purchases of land for his monastery, substitutes in place of the mancus the Latin word "aureus," which properly applies to a coin.—(Hist. Elien. pp. 446-7, 476, 480.) It has already been remarked, that as some denominations of Saxon money had grown obsolete in their original meaning, he substituted for them the Norman mode of computation; and hence, as he always employed the French for the English shilling, and, on one occasion at least, the French for the English pound, so it is probable that he also made use of the French "aureus" to express the English mancus.

In conclusion, it is hardly necessary to advert to the expression in Beda (l. iii. c. 8), in which Earcongote, daughter of the king of Kent, is called the golden coin that came from Kent to France—Aureum illud numisma, quod eo de Cantia venerat. This was nothing more than a complimentary expression, which shows that gold coins were known in France, but cannot prove that they were current in Kent.

NOTE P (pp. 253, et seq.).

EDWY AND ELGIVE.

That the reader may form some notion of the controversy respecting the history of Edwy and Elgive, it will be convenient to divide the writers on that subject into two classes,—those who lived before, and those who lived after the Conquest.

I.—1. In the first class the most ancient is the celebrated Bridferth of Ramsey, who may perhaps be called a contemporary, because he learned much of his narrative from Dunstan himself. According to Bridferth, the lady of high birth who, with her daughter, visited the young king on the day of his coronation, was called Ethelgive; and it was at her instigation that Dunstan was afterwards driven out of the kingdom. He then relates the insurrection of the Mercians, and the expulsion of Edwy from Mercia; but makes no more mention of Ethelgive either there or in any other part of his work.

But what was the object of Ethelgive's visit on the day of the coronation? Bridferth says that it was to induce the king to marry either her or her daughter—Eotenus videlicet, quo sese vel etiam natam suam sub conjugali titulo illi innectendo sociaret.—(MS. Cleop. 76.) That such was her intention he could only learn from the general suspicion or report; but it is evident that no such suspicion or report could have existed, if the king were married already. It is plain therefore that, on the day of the coronation, neither Ethelgive nor her daughter could have been the king's wife.

2. We have a life of Archbishop Odo by an Anglo-Saxon writer, among the Cotton MSS. in the British Museum (Nero, i. f. 1), which has formed the groundwork of all the later lives of that prelate. From this manuscript we learn that Edwy, having been married, still kept a woman, whom he had carried off by force, in one of the royal villas. Now it was a law of the Anglo-Saxons, often re-enacted, that,

"if foul, defiled, notorious adulteresses were found anywhere within the land, they should be driven out of the country" (Thorpe i. 174, 316, 378); and it was probably in execution of this law, that Odo, at the head of his retainers, proceeded to the villa, took possession of the woman, and sent her out of the kingdom. The words of the writer are—Rex ut insolens juventus solet, vitam ducens sub uxore propria, alteram adamavit, quam et rapuit, sacra decreta Christianæ legis negligens. Antistes autem, Phineatico zelo (See Numbers xxv. 7) stimulatus, et ira Dei irritatus, repente cum sociis equum ascendit, et ad villam, qua mulier mansitabat, pervenit, eamque rapuit, et de regno perduxit, regemque dulcibus admonuit verbis.—(Nero, i. 1 b.) Here we have mention of a marriage, but not of a marriage before the coronation. This statement, therefore, is not contradictory of that by Bridferth.

3. In a copy of the Saxon Chronicle we read—DCCCCLVIII. On þyrum ȝeare Oda arcebiscop toforæmed Eadri cynnȝe and Ælfȝife for þæm þ hi pæron to nibbe.—(Tib. B. iv.) "In this year 958, Archbishop Odo separated King Edwy and Ælfgive, because they were near of kin." This entry supposes a marriage; but by stating that the separation was made by the archbishop in the third or fourth year of Edwy's reign, it leaves us to infer that such marriage took place long after the coronation. It does not, therefore, contradict Bridferth; but it certainly contradicts the MS. Nero, where the woman from whom the king is separated is not his wife, but a mistress kept by him during his wife's lifetime.

4. Mr. Turner notices an Abingdon charter to which Ælfgive subscribes as the king's wife, and Ethelgive as her mother (Testes fuerunt Ælfgiva regis uxor, et Æthelgiva mater ejus). Now Dr. Lappenberg, principally on the authority of this document, describes Edwy as married before his coronation.—(Vol. i. p. 399.) But it is confessed by Mr. Turner, that the instrument is of very questionable authenticity; and even if it were genuine, it would prove only that the king was married at the time when he subscribed the charter. There is nothing in it, or in the entry in the Saxon Chronicle just mentioned, to establish the existence of a marriage before the coronation. So far, then,

as Anglo-Saxon authorities are concerned, the testimony of Bridferth stands unimpeached. Whether the woman from whom Edwy was separated was his wife or mistress, is more doubtful.

II.—1. We now come to the Anglo-Norman writers. In 1070, happened the great fire at Canterbury, in which an immense mass of valuable papers was destroyed, and among them many of the documents appertaining to the history of St. Dunstan; so that Osbern, the precentor, when he undertook to write the life of the archbishop, was compelled to have recourse to such Anglo-Saxon versions as he could discover. He was followed in the beginning of the eleventh century by Eadmer whose work has been published entirely by Surius (Col. Agrip. 1618), and partially by Wharton.—(Ang. Sac. ii. p. 211.) Both Osbern and Eadmer perfectly agree. They adopt the narrative of Bridferth, as far as Bridferth goes; and then, writing from some unknown source, inform us, that during the insurrection of the Mercians, Ethelgive, the enemy of Dunstan, separated from Edwy in his flight, but fell at Gloucester into the hands of the pursuers, who first severed the muscles of her legs, and then put her to death—Regem cum adultera fugitantem persequi non desistunt, et ipsam quidem juxta Claudium civitatem repertam subnervavere, deinde qua digna erat morte, multavere.—(Osbern, Ang. Sac. ii. 106.) Nefandam meretricem ejus juxta civitatem Glavorniam mala morte perdiderunt.—(Ead. apud Sur. pp. 237, 238.) It is plain that neither of these had seen the ancient Life of Odo. They write as if they had never read of any previous separation of Edwy from Ethelgive. In their pages she appears to have remained with him till the time of his flight, and to have suffered death from the hands of the insurgents.

2. Besides the Life of St. Dunstan by Osbern, we have a Life of St. Odo, which once was falsely attributed to the same writer, and is now, with perhaps as little reason, attributed to Eadmer. This author, whoever he may be, describes the scene at the coronation from Bridferth, and then turning to the ancient Life of Odo already mentioned, describes from it, partly in the very same words, the forcible expulsion of Edwy's mistress. But he makes no mention of the king's previous marriage; and adds, that the woman

was branded in the face, and taken to Ireland, where she remained till her wounds were healed, when she returned to England, and was captured near Gloucester by the retainers of Odo, who severed the muscles of her legs, and caused her death. Ab hominibus servi Dei comprehensa, et ne meretricio more ulterius vaga discurreret, subnervata, post aliquot dies mala morte præsenti vitæ sublata est.—(Ang. Sac. ii. 84.) Here we have several particulars never mentioned before; additions which read very like an attempt to reconcile the narrative in the Life of Odo with that in Osbern and Eadmer, whose works, it is evident from the language of this biographer, were lying before him.

3. After Eadmer, at the distance of twenty or thirty years, comes Malmesbury, who seems to have framed the most consistent story in his power out of these conflicting authorities. He represents Edwy as passionately enamoured of a female relative, and cohabiting with her as his wife, in opposition to the advice of his wise men, even before his coronation, and dismissing her at last through compulsion on the part of the archbishop—Proxime cognatam invadens uxorem, ejus formæ deperibat, sapientium consilia fastidiens. Ipso quippe die, quo in regem sacratus fuerat, &c.—(De Reg. i. 233.) This singular expression—invadens uxorem—deserves attention. It has often been taken by writers to mean an actual marriage. To me it seems to intimate the very contrary,—that Edwy had taken a near relative, and lived with her as if she was his wife, in defiance of law and religion. She is called in the very passage "ganea et pellex."

Some time later, Malmesbury wrote his work, entitled De Pontificibus; and there, in his account of Odo, he states that the archbishop excommunicated the king, exiled his paramour, and treated her, on her return, as was stated by the last writer—Pontificis animos irritavit, ut et ipsum a Christianitate suspenderet, et ganeæ pellicatum primo expulsione et post succissura poplitis interrumperet. Reddit ille (Rex) vicem in monachos totius Britanniæ debacchatus. —(De Pont, l. i. fol. 114 b.) The reader will observe that this excommunication of the king is entirely new, being unnoticed by other writers; and that the expulsion and death of Elgive is described, in opposition to every former

account, as having happened previously to the persecution of the monks.

On the whole, it appears to me that little credit is due to these Anglo-Norman biographers. Each in succession adds a new circumstance to the particulars related by those who preceded him, which provokes a suspicion that, dissatisfied with the incoherent matter supplied by written authority, they were fain to embellish their narratives with the tales supplied by local tradition.

It may here be also observed, that the Latin chroniclers, when they copied the entry already quoted from the Saxon Chronicle, honestly avowed their ignorance of its real meaning. Odo, they say, separated Edwy and Elgive, either because, as is *reported*, she was near to him in kin, or because he cohabited with her, though he was married to another—vel quia, ut fertur, propinqua illius extiterit, vel quia ipsam sub propria uxore adamavit (See Simeon, and Hoveden, and Florence of Worcester, ad ann. 958); where the reader will observe that they treat that part of the entry in the Chronicle which regards consanguinity, as a mere report, and oppose to it the very words of the Nero MS.—sub propria uxore adamavit. If they were unable then, we cannot hope, at the present day, to solve the enigma.

NOTE Q (p. 267).

The description to which reference is here made will be found in note C on the Anglo-Saxon Churches, p. 347.

NOTE R (p. 274).

MONKS AFTER THE REFORM.

It appears that even after this restoration of the monastic order in the reign of Edgar, individual monks were in the

habit of inheriting and possessing property. I subjoin a few instances.

1. Thus, St. Oswald, who styles himself magnifica poliarch(ont)is Christi allubescente dinami, Weogernensium paroechiæ prælatus, by the advice of King Edgar, and with the consent of the Ealdorman Ælfhere, grants five folclands and a half, from the lands of the church of Worcester, to his brother Osulf, for his life, and to two heirs after his death, both to be named by him. Of these two, the second named is the *monk* Æthelstan.—Codex Diplom. ii. 407.

2. Ædnoth and his wife bequeath their lands to the abbey of Ramsey, on condition that the monks, as soon as they come into possession, shall yearly pay to Atheric, the son of the testators, and a monk of the same abbey, the sum of two pounds for habit money—Duas libras singulis annis Æthelrico monacho, filio nostro, ad vestitum procurabunt.—Hist. Rames. p. 459.

3. "It is witnessed in this writing how King Canute gave up to Christchurch, in Canterbury, that land at Folkstone, when Eadsi his priest turned monk there, upon this condition, that Eadsi the *monk* shall have it all his lifetime; but may neither give it, nor sell it, nor lose it by default, nor forfeit it so as to defeat the right of the convent; and after his days are ended, let the land go to those who serve God in Christchurch."—Palgrave, ii. ccxxv.

4. In the same reign Bishop Ætheric gave Bodkesham, three hides of land, to Ramsey; and the abbot bestowed it as a læn on the monk Ailric, the relation of the bishop, who retained possession, paying rent and doing service to the abbey, till the Norman Conquest.—Hist. Ram. c. lxxxix. p. 445.

5. In the reign of Hardicanute, Morcar, the monk of Ramsey, quitted in open court all claim to the inheritance of his father and relatives, and then received it back again to hold of the abbey by the payment of a yearly rent. He kept it till the Conquest.—Hist. Elien. c. ci. p. 450.

NOTE R (p. 292).

ÆLFRIC THE TRANSLATOR.

Ælfric was a favourite name among the Anglo-Saxons. It occurs perpetually in history, and in the subscriptions to charters. We often meet with ealdormen and thanes, bishops, priests, and abbots, signing the same instrument under the name of Ælfric.

I. Ælfric the Translator was an abbot; so much we learn from his own testimony. But where was he abbot? Or did he ever rise to any higher office in the church?

These questions have been repeatedly discussed among antiquaries. Wharton undertook to set them at rest in a dissertation inserted in his Anglia Sacra (tom. i. p. 155), in which he maintained that Ælfric the Translator was abbot in the cathedral church of Winchester, and afterwards archbishop of York. He is manifestly wrong. There was no abbot, but a prior only, in the cathedral church of Winchester, the bishop discharging the office of abbot; and the prior was the individual who was raised to the northern archbishopric—Wulstano successit Ælfricus, Wintoniensis præpositus.—Sim. Dun. 177.

After Wharton, Mores wrote a dissertation, entitled, De Ælfrico Dorobernensi Archiepiscopo Commentarius, which was published by Thorkelin in 1789. This writer (and his opinion has been often adopted) follows Ælfric step by step, from a stall in the monastery of Cerne to the abbotcy of St. Alban's, and from St. Alban's to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury. But his proof is defective. He shows us, indeed, the two ends of the chain, but the link which should connect them is invisible. It may be that Ælfric, abbot of St. Alban's, was afterwards archbishop of Canterbury; but there is nothing to identify this abbot of St. Alban's with Ælfric the Translator at Cerne.

In a former work I suffered myself to be overruled by the authority of Mores; but a more minute and patient inquiry

has convinced me, that there exists no sufficient reason to believe that Ælfric the Translator was ever raised to the episcopal bench, much less to either of the archiepiscopal thrones. If we consult his own writings, he always presents himself to us as monk, mass-priest, or abbot; nowhere does he assume the rank or the title of bishop. For proof to the contrary we are, indeed, referred to an episcopal charge, composed by him, and beginning with the words, uꝛ biꝛcopum ȝebaꝛenað—it becomes us bishops; but it should be remembered that this charge was composed, not for his own use, but for that of the archbishop of York, and that, in the preface to it, he styles himself only abbot—Ælfricus Abbas, Vulstano venerabili archiepiscopo salutem in Christo. —Thorpe, ii. 364.

The most ancient testimony respecting the rank of Ælfric, is perhaps that which occurs in some verses in the twelfth century, among the fragments discovered by Sir Thomas Phillipps in the archives of Worcester Cathedral, and published by him in 1838. From them it is plain that he was then known only as an abbot. The object of the writer is to contrast the state of the church in Anglo-Saxon times, with its state at the time when he wrote, under the Normans. Formerly, the upper clergy were natives, and able to instruct the people; but in his time they were foreigners, unable to speak the language of the people. In proof of this he enumerates the teachers of former times. The fragment begins with Beda, who made translations for the benefit of the people; then comes Ælfric *the abbot*, who translated the Pentateuch of Moses; after him follow "*the bishops* who taught Christianity: Wilfrid of Ripon, John of Beverley, Cuthbert, Oswald, Egwin, Aldhelm, Swithin, Aidan, Birinus, Quickhelm of Rochester, Dunstan, and Elphege, who taught in *English*." It is evident, from this division of writers and teachers into classes, that Ælfric was known to the author of this document as a mass-priest and abbot, but not as archbishop of Canterbury or York; otherwise he would undoubtedly have been reckoned among his episcopal brethren.

There is, however, one ancient writer who has raised Ælfric the Translator to the episcopacy,—William of Malmesbury,—by whom we are told that he was appointed to the abbey of Malmesbury by King Edgar, at the restoration of

the order in the reign of that king, and was afterwards, in his old age—cum jam grandævus esset—promoted to the bishopric of Crediton, which he held till his death, about four years later.—(Ang. Sac. ii. p. 33.) It is difficult to give full credence to this account. The real Ælfric was still abbot when he wrote the charge for Archbishop Wulstan, who did not enter on his office till the year 1003; he was still abbot when he wrote his Life of St. Æthelwold in 1005, for he wrote it full twenty years after the death of that prelate, when Kenulf was bishop of Winchester—Alfricus abbas, Wintoniensis alumnus, honorabili episcopo Kenulfo . . . aliqua de gestis patris nostri Æthelwoldi memoriæ commendare, transactis videlicet *viginti annis* post ejus migrationem, &c.—(Act. SS. Bened. sæc. v. p. 606.) Now Ælfric, the abbot of Malmesbury, appears to have been made bishop of Crediton as early as the year 977, and to have died in 981.—(Malm De Pont. f. 145 b. Ang. Sac. i. 129.) If this be so, the probable conclusion is, that the monks of Malmesbury had confounded the two Ælfrics, and appropriated to their abbot the writings of the translator. Even if we doubt the chronology of the bishops of Sherborne, and give credit to the narrative of the historian, Ælfric must resign all claim to the thrones of Canterbury and York, and be content with four years' possession of a subordinate mitre.

But Malmesbury's account of this prelate has exposed him, gratuitously as far as I can judge, to the charge of dishonesty and untruthfulness. Mr. Soames (Hist. p. 224) tells us that Malmesbury writes of Ælfric, "as if he had never seen his works. Their fame, he does not dissemble, had reached his ears; but with exemplary caution he doubts whether, from lapse of time, it may not have been greater than the pieces merited." "This," for he must have been acquainted with them, "leads to a suspicion of unfairness. It is not easy to acquit him of a deliberate intention to suppress the memory of Ælfric, and to bury his very name under a mass of helpless uncertainty."

But then why should he have such intention? Because, it is answered, he knew that the doctrine of Ælfric on the Eucharist was contrary to the more fashionable doctrine of Archbishop Lanfranc and his followers.—(Ibid. 225-6.)

Now this imputation is founded entirely on part of a sentence, which has been so mutilated by the negligence of copyists, that it is impossible to extract any consistent meaning from it.—Eum peritum literarum, præsertimque elegantissimum interpretem, nisi fallax tradit vetustas, ædificandi gnarum, qui omnes monachorum officinas, eo tempore præstantissimas, nec adhuc adeo despicabiles, fundavit et consummavit.—(Ang. Sac. ii. 33.) From the first line in the passage—eum peritum literarum, præsertimque elegantissimum interpretem, nisi fallax tradit vetustas—it is contended, that Malmesbury hints a doubt of the elegance of Ælfric's works, as if he had never thought it worth his while to look into them. To me, however, even in the supposition that the text is correct, and that the meaning is completed with the word vetustas, it is plain that Malmesbury hinted a very different thing. His doubt will attach, not to the merit of the works, but to the identity of their author. Was the Ælfric of whom he was writing the same person with Ælfric the Translator, as the tradition of his monastery assumed? It is of this that he hints a doubt, and with good reason, as has been shown already. But so far was Malmesbury from affecting ignorance of the works of Ælfric, or of their merit, that a few lines lower down he enumerates several of them, not forgetting his translations—libros multos ex Latino in patrium sermonem versos—and pronounces them no mean evidence of his abilities—non exigua ingenii monumenta. —Ang. Sac. ibid.

II. That, however, which has made Ælfric a prominent character in the history of the Anglo-Saxon church, as it has been written during the three last centuries, is not his rank in the hierarchy, nor his ability as a translator, but the language in which he has occasionally expressed his opinion respecting the sacrament of the Eucharist. The following extracts from his homily on Easter Sunday will contain the most important passages which he has left us on that subject.

Having quoted the words of our blessed Lord at the institution of the sacrament, and his declaration to the Jews in the sixth chapter of St. John, he proceeds thus: "Now some men have often inquired and do yet frequently make inquiry, how the bread that is prepared out of corn,

and is baked through the heat of the fire, may be changed to Christ's body, and the wine that is wrung out of many berries be changed through any blessing to the Lord's blood. Now say we to such men, that some things are said of Christ by token, some in reality. Sooth thing and real it is, that Christ was born of a maiden, and suffered death of his own will, and was buried, and on this (Easter) day rose from death. He is called bread through token, and a lamb, a lion, and other things . . . and yet he is not bread in his true kind, nor a lamb, nor a lion. Why then is the holy housel called Christ's body or his blood, if it be not truly that which it is called? Truly, the bread and wine, that are hallowed through the priest's mass, present one thing to men's senses outwardly, and call up another thing to the minds of believers inwardly. Outwardly, they are seen (or seem) bread and wine in appearance and taste; yet, after the hallowing, they are in sooth through ghostly mystery Christ's body and his blood. . . . Behold now we see two things in the water of baptism. It is in its own kind corruptible water; through ghostly mystery it hath a saving power. So also, if we inquire into the holy housel according to its bodily appearance, then see we that it is a corruptible and changeable creature; but if we are aware of the ghostly power that is in it, then we understand that life is therein, which giveth immortality to those who eat it with belief. Much difference is there between the invisible power of the holy housel, and the visible appearance of its own kind. In kind it is corruptible bread and corruptible wine; and according to the power of the divine word it is in sooth Christ's body and his blood; not, however, in bodily guise, but after a ghostly manner. Truly, the body in which Christ suffered was born of the flesh of Mary, with blood and bone, with skin and sinews, with many limbs, and a reasonable soul, giving life to it; and his ghostly body, which we call the housel, is gathered of many corns, without blood and bone, limbless and soulless; and therefore we are to understand nothing therein after a bodily, but everything is to be understood after a ghostly manner. Whatever is in the housel that giveth to us the substance of life, that is of the ghostly power, and of invisible framing. Therefore the holy housel is called the

mystery, because one thing is seen therein, and another is understood. . . . Many receive that holy body, yet it is whole in every particle by ghostly mystery. . . . In sooth it is, as we have already said, Christ's body and his blood, not after a bodily but after a ghostly manner. Nor are you to inquire how it is made so: but to hold in your belief that it is made so."—(Sermo in die sancti Pascæ, pp. 4—7.) Similar expressions are used by Ælfric in other parts of his writings; but it is presumed that the foregoing is a fair sample of his doctrine.

Attention was first called to this homily by Archbishop Parker, who published it in 1566, under the title of "A Testimony of Antiquitie, shewing the ancient faith in the Church of England touching the sacrament of the body and blood of the Lord, here publicly preached and also received in the Saxons' time above six hundred years ago." The chief parts of it were afterwards thought worthy of a place in Foxe's "Acts and Monuments," and were incorporated in that work, in the edition of 1610. Since that period Ælfric's homily has been considered by a host of writers of the highest importance, and has been constantly appealed to as an unanswerable proof that the doctrine of the Anglo-Saxon church on the Eucharist was very different from, or rather was contrary to, that of the church of Rome. Now with the truth or falsehood of doctrine the writer of these pages has at present no concern. His duty is to investigate only matters of history; and, as matter of history, he does not hesitate to assert, that the doctrine thus attributed to the Anglo-Saxon church, on the supposed authority of Ælfric, never was, either before or after his time, the real doctrine of that church.

1. But, in the first place, it may be asked why the appeal is made to Ælfric exclusively. The English church had existed almost four hundred years before he was born, and had produced theological scholars infinitely his superiors in every respect. Why is their authority to be set aside, and no attention to be paid to any one but to Ælfric? Is it not because he has adopted a sort of language very different from theirs? That which characterizes his language with respect to the Eucharist, is the distinction which he draws between the body of Christ exist-

ing after a bodily, and the same body existing after a ghostly or spiritual manner. Now, whatever he may mean by that distinction (a question which will be noticed hereafter), nothing like it is to be found in the writings of the Anglo-Saxon scholars who preceded him. It is not, in fact, of native but of foreign origin. He is indebted for it to Bertram, a monk of Corbie, who wrote about the year 860. Of that there can be no doubt; for there is scarcely a sentence in the homily which may not be traced to the work of Bertram. Ælfric, then, may be a faithful expositor of the opinion of Bertram, but it remains to be shown that he is a faithful expositor of the faith of the Anglo-Saxon Christians.

2. It is manifestly incumbent on those who attribute so much authority to the language of Ælfric, to show that the doctrine which they persuade themselves that they find in his homily, agrees with the doctrine contained in the theological writings and documents of the four preceding centuries. If it do not, on no pretence can it be taken for the authorized doctrine of those centuries. This appears to be conceded by Mr. Soames, when he asserts that "Ælfric explained the Eucharist in strict unison with the most illustrious of the Anglo-Saxon divines. Undoubtedly he is more clear, full, and forcible; and the reason is that controversy had suggested and demanded language for which earlier divines found no occasion."—(Soames, Anglo-Sax. Church, p. 226, note.) But where is the proof of this "unison and agreement?" The doctrine supposed to be taught by Ælfric is, that the bread and wine are not really changed by consecration into the body and blood of Christ; but are still bread and wine, figures of that body and blood: *the only change or conversion being spiritual, and applying to spiritual receiving alone.*"—Id. 233, note 1.

Now if Ælfric, indeed, taught this doctrine, he must have been the first who taught it; for it was not the doctrine of those who wrote before him. Of it, or of anything like to it, not a trace is to be found in any document connected with the ancient English church; not in the acts of her councils, not in the liturgical and euchological forms of her worship, not in the correspondence, or biography, or works of her writers. And I make this assertion with the

greater confidence, not only because I have made the inquiry myself, but also because it is now almost three hundred years since Archbishop Parker and his followers were challenged to produce the testimony of any other native writer in support of this supposed doctrine of Ælfric; and yet, as far as I can learn, no man to the present day has responded to the call. Undoubtedly they would have done so, had it been in their power.

3. But I will go still further, and assert that, if such was the teaching of Ælfric, it was never adopted by the Anglo-Saxon church. The proof is plain. It is agreed on all hands, that the Church of England taught the doctrine of transubstantiation for centuries before the Reformation: if she rejected it in the time of Ælfric, or immediately afterwards, when did she pass from that creed to adopt the opposite? It is not often that a national church changes her creed or her worship without attracting the notice of history. Yet of this supposed change in a matter of the first importance—of this passage from the profession of a doctrine of easy belief to one the most mysterious and incomprehensible, no mention whatsoever has been made by any ancient author. From history one should naturally suppose that the Normans found in England the practice of the same religion to which they had been habituated in their own country. We read of no councils assembled to enforce a new creed or new worship; of no canons enacted, no injunctions issued, no visitors appointed. How happened it, then, that the hitherto unheard-of belief of transubstantiation was universally adopted in England? We are told that it was done quietly and silently; that Lanfranc was the new archbishop; that he had written against Berengarius; and that, to gratify his pride or his obstinacy, all—clergy, monks, and people—conspired to walk over from the faith in which they had been bred, to the doctrine which he maintained, without appearing to be even conscious of the alteration. Seriously to attempt a refutation of this statement would be to insult the judgment of the reader. It is not history; it has not even the merit of plausibility. No man could have thought of it, unless some answer or other had been called for in the support of a baseless but favourite theory.

4. Mr. Soames appears, however, to have felt the necessity of stating that other Anglo-Saxons have taught the same doctrine which is assigned to Ælfric. "Colour," he says, "for charging him with innovation, there was none whatever. The century before him had produced Erigena . . . the friend of Alfred. Erigena's doctrine might be connected satisfactorily with Alcuin and Bede. . . . Thus Ælfric merely finished, but with a vigour equalled probably by Erigena alone, that unyielding array of testimony against Lanfranc's new divinity, which echoes from the whole theological school of ancient England."—(Soames, Hist. p. 226.) Now, if this be so, if there existed any such array of testimony, if the doctrine attributed to Ælfric be echoed from the whole theological school of ancient England, what can be more easy than to prove the statement by referring to the works of these authors? But Mr. Soames is as silent with respect to proof as have been his predecessors. He produces no testimony; he refers to no writing of the period; he brings forward no authority for the assertion. That, however, the reader may not be deceived or perplexed by the seeming confidence with which the statement is put forward, it may be worth the while to inquire what was the real doctrine of this ancient theological school.

The earliest of the teachers belonging to it, who has been mentioned above, is the venerable Beda. But where in the writings of Beda—they occupy twelve volumes octavo in the last edition by Dr. Giles — where in these twelve volumes is the doctrine now attributed to Beda to be found? His doctrine is directly the reverse. With him, the Eucharistic service is not a mere form of figurative communion, it is a sacrifice—a real, not a typical or metaphorical sacrifice. With him, "as often as the solemnity of the mass is celebrated, that most sacred body, and that precious blood of the Lamb, with which we have been redeemed from sin, are immolated anew to God for the benefit of our salvation." With him, "Christ washes us from our sins in his blood daily, when the memory of his blessed passion is renewed on the altar; when the creatures of bread and wine are made to pass, by means of the inexplicable hallowing of the Spirit into the sacrament of Christ's body and blood; which body is no longer slain, which blood is no longer shed, by

the hands of infidels to their ruin, but received by the mouths of the faithful to their salvation;" Christ, himself, is the priest in this sacrifice, a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedeck; the victim, the most excellent of all victims, is his body and blood, and with that body and blood are consecrated those who receive them—Missarum solemnia celebrantes, corpus sacrosanctum, et pretiosum agni nostri sanguinem, quo a peccatis redempti sumus, denuo Deo in profectum nostræ salutis immolamus.—(Hom. iv. p. 31.) Lavat nos quotidie in peccatis nostris in sanguine suo, cum ejusdem beatæ passionis ad altare memoria replicatur, cum panis et vini creatura in sacramentum carnis et sanguinis ejus ineffabili spiritus sanctificatione transfertur, sicque corpus et sanguis illius non infidelium manibus ad perniciem ipsorum funditur et occiditur, sed ore fidelium suam sumitur in salutem . . . mysterium suæ passionis ablato agno in creaturam panis et vini transtulit, sacerdos factus in æternum secundum ordinem Melchisedeck.—(Hom. xxxvii. p. 272.) Ad participationem altaris Redemptoris nostri carni et sanguini communicamus.—(Hom. xxiv. p. 175.) Ad altare ingredi, ac Dominici corporis et sanguinis victima singulari debemus consecrari.—(Hom. xviii. p. 131.) Can the man who delivers his opinions in this manner of language, have belonged to that school which denies the existence both of the victim and of the sacrifice; which has expunged from the service every syllable that could suggest any such ideas to the mind of the reader; and which admits no other than a spiritual conversion of the elements, and that, too, confined to the moment of receiving?—(Soames, p. 233.) I see not by what ingenuity this language of Beda can be reconciled with the doctrines in support of which his authority has been so recklessly invoked.

But then there is Alcuin, another teacher of the Anglo-Saxon school, to whom appeal has also been made. Now Alcuin, according to Mr. Soames, was the author of the Caroline books. If that be so, the following passage will fully disclose his opinion. "The mystery of the Lord's body and blood is not to be called the figure, but the reality; not the shadow, but the substance; not the type of future things, but that which was prefigured by types;

nor does he say, 'this is the figure of my body,' but 'this is my body, which will be delivered for you.' — Non enim corporis et sanguinis Dominici mysterium imago jam dicendum est sed veritas, non umbra sed corpus, non exemplar futurorum sed id quod exemplaribus præfigurabatur; nec ait, 'hæc est imago corporis mei,' sed 'hoc est corpus meum quod pro vobis tradetur.' "—(Lib. Carol. iv. c. 14.) This passage undoubtedly expressed the belief of the Gallican church in the reign of Charlemagne, and also of Alcuin, who was the chief teacher in the court of that monarch. But it was not written by Alcuin. He was not, as I have already shown (p. 366), the author of that work. Still of testimony from Alcuin we are in no want. We have the most satisfactory proof of his belief, in a casual phrase in one of his letters,—casual, because it could not be used by him for any theological purpose, but dropped from his pen as expressive of the common belief of himself, of his correspondent, and of their respective churches. He is writing to Paulinus, the patriarch of Aquileia, with whom he had formerly contracted the closest friendship; and begs of that prelate to pray for him, particularly during the celebration of mass, at that part which is called the consecration. "I," he says, "have inscribed the name of my Paulinus on my heart, from which it shall never be effaced. Do you on your part never forget the name of your friend Albinus in your holy prayers; but lay it up in some corner of your memory, to bring it forth, when you consecrate the bread and wine into the *substance* of the body and blood of Christ" Ne, quæso, obliviscaris in tuis sanctis orationibus nomen amici tui Albini, sed in aliquo memoriæ tuæ gazophylacio reconde illud, et profer eo tempore opportuno, quo panem et vinum in *substantiam* corporis et sanguinis Christi consecraveris.—(Oper. Alc. tom. i. p. 49, ep. xxxvi.) Was it possible to express the doctrine of transubstantiation in clearer terms, before the word itself first came into use?

The third scholar brought forward "to complete this formidable array of testimony," to supply the link which is to connect the theological school of England in the eighth with that in the tenth century, is Joannes Scotus, or Erigena. But what claim can he have to this honour? He was not an Englishman, but a Scot from Ireland: he

taught not, wrote not in England, but in France: we do not even know that he ever set his foot on English ground. —(See p. 225 of this vol.) In place of him, therefore, I shall make no apology for substituting an Anglo-Saxon, not only a native but a bishop,—Werfrith of Worcester, one of the instructors and literary assistants of King Alfred. When Alfred translated into English the pastoral of St. Gregory for the use of the Anglo-Saxon church, the bishop of Worcester translated the dialogue of the same pontiff for the same purpose; and I shall transcribe from that work, which still exists in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, the following passage, as illustrative of the doctrine of the Anglo-Saxon Church in his time,—the latter part of the ninth century:—

Foppon pe ꝛceolon Lobe aꝛeczan þa bæzhpamlican onꝛæzbneꝛꝛe upa teapa. anb eac þa bæzhpamlican onꝛæzbneꝛꝛe hiꝛ lichaman anb bloboꝛ. Soðlice þeoꝛ zeꝛæzebneꝛ zehæleð ꝛýnbeplice þa raple ꝛþam þæne ecan ꝛoppýꝛbe þeo uꝛ zeebmþað þuꝛh zeþýne þone beað þæꝛ ancenneban Lobeꝛ Sunu ꝛe þitoblice apaꝛ ꝛþam beabu, anb opep þ ne ꝛpealt. ne ꝛe beað opep hiꝛ hine ne zepýlbeð, anb þonehpæþ ꝛe lipienbe he hieꝛýlꝛum unbeablice anb unbpoꝛnoblice he býþ eꝛt onꝛæzb ꝛop uꝛ on þam zeþýne þæne halzan offnunze. Witoblice þæp hiꝛ lichoma býþ þizeb þæp bið zebæleb hiꝛ ꝛlæꝛc in þæꝛ ꝛolceꝛ hæle ⁊ hiꝛ blob bið onꝛænbeb na læꝛ na in unzeleaffullna zepealb. ac in zeleaffullna muðoꝛ. Soðlice ꝛceapian þe ꝛoppon Peteꝛ

"Therefore ought we to offer up to God the daily sacrifice of our tears, and also the daily sacrifice of his body and blood. Truly this sacrifice saveth alonely the soul from everlasting destruction, which reneweth to us through the mystery the death of the only-begotten Son of God, who truly arose from the dead, and after that dieth no more, nor hath death any more dominion over him; yet though he be living in himself immortal and incorruptible, he is again sacrificed for us in the mystery of the holy oblation. Truly his body is there eaten; his flesh is there dealed out for the salvation of the people; and his blood is poured out, not indeed into the hands of unbelievers, but into the mouths of believers.

ner ry for ur zeðon ⁊ for ure onlyrnerre. Seo onhýneþ rýmble þa þnopunze þær ancennedan Loðer Suna hpylc for þon zeleaffullra manna mæz habban ænizne tpeon þ in þa tiþ þære opfpunze heofonar ne mazon beon ontýnðe for þær racenðer rtefne ⁊ bene. oððe hpa tpeoð þær þ þænæt ne ry ænzla þneat in þam þær hælenðan Lpirter. oþþe þ ne mazen beon þar nýþerlican þinz zeþýðeð to þam healicum. ⁊ þeor eorþe zezaðenað to þam heofonlican oððe hpa tpeoð þær þ of þon zerepenlican piran ⁊ þam unzerepenlican ne maze hpæt rþylcer to anum zepeorþan þurh Loðer fultum. MS., No. 322, fol. penultimo.

Truly then, Peter, let us consider in what wise this sacrifice is done for us and for our redemption; a sacrifice which ever representeth the passion of the only-begotten Son of God. Who then of believing men can have any doubt, that during the time of the oblation the heavens are opened at the prayer and voice of the priest? Who doubteth of this, that troops of angels are present during the (mystery) of Jesus Christ? Or that nether things are thereat associated with the highest? things of this earth gathered to things of heaven? Or who doubteth of this, that of things visible and invisible a joining of both in one is then wrought by the power of God?"

Such is the language of one of the most eminent among the Anglo-Saxon prelates in the ninth century. It is true that he is only the translator; but he would never have made the translation for the use of his countrymen, had it taught a doctrine contrary to the doctrine of his church. The original passage, which may be seen in the works of St. Gregory (tom. ii. p. 471; Paris, 1705), with a Greek version from the pen of Pope Zachary, was already well known to Anglo-Saxon scholars. It is partially cited by Beda in a passage quoted in p. 417; Werfrith, by translating it, made it known to those of his countrymen who were not acquainted with the Latin language.

From these extracts, then, it will be seen that, if Beda, Alcuin, and Werfrith can be thought to represent the "Theological school of ancient England," they offer a most formidable array of testimony against the doctrine now

attributed to Ælfric. But the writings of divines are not the only source from which we may learn the real doctrine of the Anglo-Saxon church on this subject. There remains another source of still greater authority,—I mean its sacramentaries and liturgic forms. For it cannot be, that any religious society will teach one set of doctrines in its articles and creed, and an opposite set of doctrines in its worship and practice. What then was the eucharistic service of the Anglo-Saxon church? It was the mass,—the same mass which the reformers anathematized and rejected. That very same mass formed the daily service of the Anglo-Saxon church from the arrival of St. Augustine till the Norman conquest. But is it the service of the present English church? No: it has been abolished since the time of Edward VI. Can then any man believe that the doctrine of the two churches is the same? Would "the most holy sacrifice, and victim of salvation" of the one, have been changed into the figurative body and blood of Christ of the other, unless the reformers had been conscious that the ancient form represented a doctrine very different from their own? How, then, can it be pretended that those who daily celebrated the mass—and among those was Ælfric himself—held on this subject the same belief with those who abolished the mass under the pretext that it was a superstitious and idolatrous worship?

Besides the mass itself, we are still in possession of several other forms employed in the Anglo-Saxon church, and connected with its doctrine respecting the Eucharist. Martene, a Maurish monk, in his work "De Antiquis Ecclesiæ Ritibus," published copious extracts from two Anglo-Saxon pontificals; one said to have belonged to Egbert, archbishop of York in the first part of the eighth century, and preserved in the church of Evreux in Normandy; the other to Robert, archbishop of Canterbury in the reign of Edward the Confessor, and bequeathed by that prelate to the abbey of Jumièges in the same province. We have, moreover, a very ancient pontifical among the Cotton manuscripts (Claud. A. 111), two in the library of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, XLIV. and CXLVI., and others in other libraries. Now let the reader attend to two or three quotations from these forms:—1st. By the *corporale*

is meant a square piece of linen cloth spread on the altar at the offertory, preparatory to the consecration. In the Anglo-Saxon rituals, when the bishop begs the blessing of God on these cloths, he states, that "they are for the service of the altar, that the body and blood of Christ may be consecrated upon them, and also be covered with or wrapped up in them,*—Hæc linteamina in usum altaris tui ad consecrandum super ea, sive ad tegendum involvendumque corpus et sanguinem Filii tui.—(Pontif. Egb. apud Martene, ii. 255. Pont. Gemet. 265.) 2nd. He next prays that the vessel in which the Eucharist was to be kept under the single form of bread, for the use of the sick, "may become, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, a new sepulchre for the body of Christ,"—hoc vasculum novum sepulchrum Spiritus Sancti gratia perficiatur (p. 258); and afterwards denominates the vessel in which it was to be carried to the sick, "the bearer of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ,"—corporis Domini nostri Jesu Christi gerulum (pp. 258, 266). It cannot be that the church which used these forms in its public offices, could have taught, as it is said to have taught, that "consecration converts the sacramental elements *spiritually* into the body and blood of Christ; such conversion, however, applying to

* These corporales were in use from the earliest ages. They were blessed not only ad consecrandum super ea, but also ad tegendum involvendumque corpus et sanguinem Christi. In them the Eucharist was wrapped, and then placed in a small wicker basket, when the first Christians used to take it with them to their homes, and afterwards, when it was carried to the houses of the sick. Nihil illo ditius, says St. Jerome, qui corpus Domini canistro vimineo, et sanguinem portat in vitro (vol. i. epist. 125, No. xx.). Pellicia states that this was a custom as late as the sixth century (vol. ii. p. 10). According to Fridegode, where he describes the communion of St. Wilfrid on his death-bed, it was in use in England in the seventh. If I understand him correctly, the dying prelate first received the body of Christ out of the wicker basket, and then drank the life-giving blood out of the vial—

> Spiritus ergo viri, Michael repetente, beati
> Vimineo condens corpus Kyriale canistro,
> Exhausit vitro vitalem digne cruorem.
> Inter mœrentes, orantes, opperientes,
> Evasit volucer carnis ceromate liber.
>
> *Act. SS. Ben.* sæc. iv. i. 725.

spiritual receiving alone."—(Soames, ibid.) It waits not for the spiritual receiving that the conversion may take place: for it takes place from the moment of the consecration. The body and blood of Christ are there upon the corporale, and are covered with it: the body of Christ is, after the mass, deposited and kept in a new sepulchre, as his body was deposited after it was taken down from the cross; it is afterwards taken out, and carried to the house or apartment of the sick person; yet all this while, though no spiritual conversion can have taken place, it is, according to these liturgical forms, the body of Christ.

3. We now proceed to the consecration of the altar. Here the Anglo-Saxon bishop prays for the blessing of God, that "on that altar his secret power may turn the elements, selected for the sacrifice, into the body and blood of the Redeemer; and, by an invisible change, transform them into holy sacrifices of the Lamb: to the end that, as the *Word was made flesh*, so the nature of the oblation being blessed, may be improved into the substance of the Word, and that which before was food may here be made eternal life,"—quod electas ad sacrificium creaturas in corpus et sanguinem Redemptoris virtus secreta convertat, et in sacras Agni hostias invisibili mutatione transcribat, ut, sicut Verbum caro factum est, ita in Verbi substantiam benedicta oblationis natura proficiat, et quod prius fuerat alimonia, vita hic efficiatur æterna.—(Pontif. Gemet., p. 263.) Is it not evident that the church which made use of this prayer, containing such an accumulation of phrases, all evidently intended to express one and the same doctrine, taught that the Eucharistic elements lying on the altar were there substantially changed by an invisible power into the body and blood of Christ? This was the mystery, or geryne, so often mentioned by Ælfric and Werfrith.

4. From the consecration of the altar we pass to the ordination of the priest. Over him the bishop prays thus:—"O God, the author of all sanctification . . . do thou, O Lord, pour the gift of thy blessing on this thy servant, whom we now consecrate to the honour of the priesthood, that he may" (here follows an enumeration of the virtues and duties appertaining to the priesthood), "and may preserve the gift of thy ministry pure and without blame,

and may, for the worship of thy people, *transform* by an immaculate benediction (the bread and wine into) the body and blood of thy Son; and may persevere, &c."—Tu, Domine, super hunc famulum tuum, ill. quem ad presbyterii honorem dedicamus, munus tuæ benedictionis infunde, ut . . . purum et immaculatum ministerii sui donum custodiat, et per obsequium plebis tuæ [panem et vinum in] corpus et sanguinem Filii tui immaculata benedictione transformet.—(Martene, pp. 353, 366. MS. Cott. Claud. A. iii. Murator. Litur. Rom. tom. ii. p. 200. MSS. C. C. C. C. xliv., cxlvi.) In most English sacramentaries the words panem et vinum are wanting. How the omission arose, we know not; but it can make no difference with respect to the reasoning; for both forms suppose the change or transformation to take place on the altar.

5. We may now return to Ælfric and his homily. From the preceding remarks two things follow: 1st, that the Anglo-Saxon church admitted in the Eucharist a real and substantial change of the sacramental elements into the body and blood of Christ; 2nd, that the language in which Ælfric speaks of that change is new, and dissimilar from any to be found in the theological writers, or the ecclesiastical documents of the same church. The question, therefore, the only one which remains, is, what could be his object in the use of such language? Was it to introduce a new doctrine, or was it merely to elucidate the old? There is nothing in his character, or in his writings, to mark him for a reformer; and the dedication of his homilies to the archbishop, by whom the first volume was certainly, and the second probably, received with approbation, forbid us to suspect him of heterodoxy; whence the presumption is, not that the distinction which he so earnestly inculcates contradicted the established doctrine, but that it has been misunderstood by more modern writers, and made to bear a sense which he never intended it to bear. They look upon the words "lichamlice and gastlice"—"after a bodily, and after a ghostly manner"—as equivalent to "really and figuratively;" and suppose him to mean that the sacrament is not the body of Christ in reality, but a figure only of that body, the reception of which figure with faith by the

communicant makes him partaker of a certain spiritual benefit. Now if this be Ælfric's meaning, they are certainly justified in numbering him on their side; for such a spiritual body is no body at all. But can such be the meaning of Ælfric? Manifestly not. It is directly opposed to his meaning. With him the housel is not a mere figure; it is a reality. It is not to be judged of by the senses, but by faith; for it is in very sooth the body and blood of Christ, "not lichamlice or æfter lichamlice andgite" (in bodily guise, or according to bodily sense);" but "gastlice, and thurh gastlice geryne, and æfter mihte Godcundes wordes" (in ghostly manner, and through ghostly mystery, and by the might of God's word). It is not called the body and blood of Christ metaphorically, as Christ is called a lamb, a lion, and other things; but it is that which it is called; and though outwardly it seem, or is seen, bread and wine in appearance and taste, it is inwardly, in sooth, Christ's body and blood through ghostly mystery. Such mysterious operations are inaccessible to the senses, as when the child comes sinful to the font, and leaves it free from sin "through ghostly might." A distinction must, therefore, be drawn between the invisible might of the holy housel and its visible appearance. Naturally, it is bread and wine; by the might of God's word, it is in sooth the body and blood of Christ. The body in which Christ suffered was a human body in its natural state; but the body of Christ in the housel is ghostly, and therefore we must not expect to find in it the qualities of a natural body.

Such is the sum of Ælfric's doctrine, in answer to the question, how can bread and wine be changed to the body and blood of Christ? But would he have answered so, had he belonged to that theological school which now claims him as one of its former teachers? Would he not, in that case, have answered, that there was no real change in the sacramental elements at all, that by the consecration the bread and wine were made nothing more than figures of the body and blood of Christ; which, by God's appointment, granted a certain spiritual benefit to those who received them with faith? This would have been intelligible to his hearers, and easy of belief. But he appears

throughout anxious to warn his readers against any such notion; he continually bids them to be on their guard against the testimony of the senses, and to remember that this is a mystery of which the senses cannot take cognizance; and with this view he makes use of distinctions very like those adopted by the council of Trent, and in use among Catholic divines to the present day. The council teaches (Sess. xiii. c. i.) that the body of Christ exists in heaven after the natural manner of bodies—juxta modum existendi naturalem (in Ælfric, in bodily guise, and after the visible appearance of its own kind); but on earth after a sacramental or mysterious manner—sacramentaliter (in Ælfric, through ghostly mystery, which is the same thing). And Catholic divines teach, that the true and real body of Christ is in this sacrament, not after a bodily manner and subject to change, but after a spiritual and invisible manner above our comprehension—Summa doctrinæ nostræ in eo sita est, ut verum et reale corpus Christi profiteamur esse in hoc sacramento, non more corporali et passibili, sed spirituali et invisibili nobis omnino incognito.—Holden, Analys. Fidei, p. 192, edit. 1767.

In another homily on the law of God Ælfric informs us, that the unlearned knew not what to make of this "ghostly" doctrine—ꝑe unȝelæꝛneda þæꝛ ȝelŷꝛan ne cunne; and, as if he were aware that such would be the case with the present discourse, he at once cuts short the discussion by informing his hearers that it is not for them to explain, but to believe; not to inquire "how this mystery is done, but to hold that it is done." Then, to convince them, he adopts a method far more likely to influence their rude unlettered minds than all his distinctions and reasonings: he narrates to them the following story of a miracle. "We read," he says, "in another book, called 'Vitæ Patrum,' that two monks prayed to God for some manifestation respecting the holy Eucharist, and after their prayer attended at mass. There saw they a child lying on the altar at which the priest said mass, and God's angel stood with a sword waiting till the priest brake the housel, when the angel divided the child in twain upon the dish, and poured the blood into the chalice. But afterwards, when they went to receive, it was changed again to bread and

wine; and they received it, thanking God for his manifestation." Most certainly the man who appealed to this legend in support of his doctrine, must have believed with his countryman Alcuin, that in the holy mystery (the name by which they designated the mass), the bread and wine were really consecrated into the substance of the body and blood of Christ.—See p. 418.

I may be allowed, before I conclude, to notice a fact which appears to me to set at rest the question respecting the supposed identity of the doctrine of Berengarius with the doctrine of the Anglo-Saxon church. In the council held in Rome, under Leo IX., in the year 1050, it was proved from the writings of Berengarius, that he had extolled the works of Joannes Scotus, depreciated those of Paschasius, and taught doctrines respecting the Eucharist contrary to the common faith of the church; on which account judgment of condemnation and excommunication was passed against him—Intellecto quod Joannem Scotum extolleres, Paschasium damnares, communi de Eucharistia fidei adversa sentires, promulgata est in te damnationis sententia privans te communione ecclesiæ, quam tu privare sancta ejus communione satagebas. — (Lanf. adversus Bereng. Bib. Pat. xi. p. 338.) Now had the Anglo-Saxon church any part in this proceeding? It had; for it was represented there by two of its most distinguished prelates, — Heriman, bishop of Sherborne, and Aldred, bishop of Worcester. On the ancient roll of the members of the council, the thirty-fourth entry is the name of Herimannus Corbinensis Ep'us, and the thirty-fifth, that of Aldredus Wigradensis Ep'us.—(Mansi, i. p. 1294.) The foreign scribe has given the names of Heriman and Aldred correctly, but has erred, as was not unlikely, in the titles of their churches, writing Corbinensis for Sherbornensis, and Wigradensis for Wigracensis. But that the persons thus designated were the two Anglo-Saxon prelates is plain, both from a charter of Edward the Confessor, stating that Heriman and Aldred consulted the pontiff, in the presence of a very numerous council, respecting the king's vow of making a pilgrimage to Rome; and from the testimony of the chroniclers, that the same prelates arrived in Rome on Easter Eve (Chron. Sax. Gib. p. 161. Chron. Lamb. ad x.

ann. 1051. Hoved. ad ann. 1050), which was a fortnight before the opening of the council. These writers differ indeed with respect to the number of the year; as they differ with respect to the date of every other event: but they all place the arrival of the two bishops in Rome between the councils of Rheims and Vercelli, of which it is known that the first was held in October, 1049, and the second in September, 1050.

Now this condemnation and excommunication of Berengarius took place within thirty or forty years of the death of Ælfric, and about sixteen before the Conquest. What, then, are we to say? That the Anglo-Saxon prelates anathematized on account of his doctrine a man who taught the very doctrine which they had always taught? or that the opinions of Berengarius were contrary to the worship which they practised, and the faith which they professed? Manifestly the latter.

Perhaps I should make some apology for the length of this note. There can be no doubt that the misapprehension respecting the doctrine of Ælfric arose from this, that the reformed divines had adopted the term *ghostly*, or *spiritually*, as distinctive of their own doctrine; and finding the same term in Ælfric, in connection with the same subject, concluded at once that he thought with them, and belonged to the same theological school. The error has been continually repeated for near three hundred years, and is now generally accepted for a fact, without doubt or inquiry. On this account I thought it a duty to investigate the real doctrine of the Anglo-Saxon church from the beginning, and to show that the language of Ælfric, if correctly understood, was in perfect accordance with that doctrine. How far I have succeeded, it is for the reader to judge.

NOTE T (p. 312).

OATH OF ST. BONIFACE.

St. Boniface, in his correspondence, frequently refers to the oath which he took at his ordination by Gregory XI.

It was customary for every bishop consecrated at Rome to make a public profession of his faith, and to bind himself by oath to observe it, subscribing the copy with his own hand, and depositing it on the tomb of St. Peter. The pope himself made the promise to the apostle and his church; other bishops, to the apostle and his successor.

The oath taken by St. Boniface has been preserved among the epistles of Gregory II., under the title of Indiculus sacramenti, quod Bonifacius Romæ, cum ordinaretur, edidit, et manu sua subscriptum obtulit. It is as follows:—

1. In nomine Domini Dei et Salvatoris nostri Jesu Christi, imperante Domno Leone a Deo coronato, magno imperatore, anno vi. post consulatum ejus; sed et Constantino magno imperatore ejus filio, anno iii. indictione vi.

2. Promitto ego Bonifacius, Dei gratia episcopus, tibi beato Petro, Apostolorum principi, vicarioque tuo beato Gregorio Papæ et successoribus ejus, per Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum, Trinitatem inseparabilem, et per sacratissimum corpus tuum, me omnem fidem et puritatem sanctæ fidei Catholicæ exhibere, et in unitate ejusdem fidei, Deo operante, persistere, in qua omnis Christianorum salus sine dubio esse comprobatur; nullo modo me contra unitatem communis et universalis ecclesiæ, suadente quopiam, consentire, sed, ut dixi, fidem et puritatem meam atque concursum tibi et utilitatibus ecclesiæ tuæ, cui a Domino Deo potestas ligandi solvendique data, et prædicto vicario tuo atque successoribus ejus per omnia exhibere.

3. Sed et, si cognovero antistites contra instituta antiqua sanctorum patrum conversari cum eis nullam habere communionem aut conjunctionem, sed magis, si valuero

prohibere, prohibebo; sin minus, fideliter Domno meo apostolico renunciabo.

4. Quodsi, quod absit, contra hujus promissionis meæ seriem aliquid facere quolibet modo seu ingenio vel occasione tentavero, reus inveniar in æterno judicio, ultionem Ananiæ et Saphyræ incurram, qui vobis, etiam de rebus propriis, fraudem facere, vel falsum dicere præsumpserunt.

5. Hunc autem indiculum sacramenti ego Bonifacius, exiguus episcopus, manu propria scripsi, atque ponens supra sacratissimum corpus beati Petri, ita ut præscriptum est, Deo teste et judice, præstiti sacramentum, quod et servare promitto.

Originally No. 3 in this oath ran in the following manner:—"Promitto pariter, quod si quid contra rempublicam seu piissimum principem nostrum a quolibet agi cognovero, minime consentire, sed, in quantum virtus suffragaverit, obviare, et vicario tuo Domino meo Apostolico modis, quibus potero, nuntiare, et id agere vel facere, quatenus fidem meam in omnibus sincerissimam exhibeam."

It is plain, however, that this clause could apply only to subjects of the Roman empire; and, therefore, about the time of St. Gregory, when the Lombards had established their sway in the north of Italy, it was commuted, in favour of bishops living under their dominion, for the following form:—"Promitto pariter festinare omni annisu, ut semper pax quam Deus diligit, inter rempublicam et nos, hoc est gentem Longobardorum, conservetur, et nullo modo contra agere vel facere quidpiam adversum, quatenus fidem meam in omnibus sincerissimam exhibeam."

But Boniface was neither a subject of the emperor nor of the king of the Lombards. He was a foreigner, an itinerant or missionary bishop, who had to make a diocese for himself among barbarous and heathen nations. Neither form then could apply to him; but in place of the promise made by the bishops of the Empire or of Lombardy, he promised, as the reader as seen in No. 3, to hold no communion with prelates or people living in opposition to the institutions of the ancient fathers, if he should meet with any such in the course of his mission; but when he found himself unable to reform the abuse, to refer the

matter to the Holy See. Whether this was an accustomed form in the oath taken by missionary bishops, or was required from Boniface only, is unknown.

If we take the latter supposition, we must acknowledge that the result fully justified the policy of the pontiff. On the one hand the mission of the Anglo-Saxon, which lay among nations recently subdued by the Franks, necessarily led him into frequent communication with the Gallic prelates; and on the other, the obligation of his oath compelled him to attempt, in concert with the pope, the reformation of the abuses which, during half a century of violence and misrule among the Frankish chieftains, had crept into the Gallic church. We have seen that the attempt proved in a great measure successful.

NOTE (U).

THE LORD'S PRAYER AND THE APOSTLES' CREED.

I SHALL here add, in English characters, a translation of the Lord's Prayer, and the Apostles' Creed, from the Cotton MS. Cleop. b. xiii., supposed to be of the tenth century.

THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Thu ure Fæder the eart on heofenum, se thin nama gehalgod, gecume thin rice, sy thin willa swa swa on heofenum, swa eac on eorthan; syle us to dæg urne dæghwamlican hlaf, and forgyf us ure gyltas swa swa we forgyfath tham the with us agyltath. and ne læd thu na us on costunge, ac alys us fram yfele. Sy it swa.

Thou our Father that art in heaven, be thy name hallowed: come thy kingdom: be thy will as in heaven, so also on earth: give us to-day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, so as we forgive them that against us trespass: and do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Be it so.

THE CREED.

Ic gelyfe on God Fæder Ælmihtigne, scyppend heofenum and eorthan, and Ic gelyfe on hæland Crist his ancennedan sune

I believe in God, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. And I believe in Jesus Christ his only-begotten son, our

urne drihten se wæs geacnad of tham halgan Gaste, and acenned of Mariam tham mædene, gethrowod under tham Pontiscan Pilate, on rode ahangen, he wæs dead and be-byrged, and he nyther astah to helle, and he aras of deathe ontham thryddan dæge, and he astrah up to heofenum, and sitt nu at swithran Godes Ælmihtiges Fæder. Thanon he wile cuman to demenne ægther ge tham cucum, ge tham deadum. And I gelyfe on tham halgan Gaste, and tha halgan gelathunge, and halgena ge-mænnysse, and synna forgyfennys, and flæsces arist, and eac life. Sy hit swa.

Lord, who was conceived of the Holy Ghost, and born of Mary the maiden, suffered under the Pontius Pilate, on a rood hanged he was dead and buried, and he went down to hell, and he rose from death on the third day, and he went up to heaven, and sits now at the right hand of God, Almighty Father. Thence he will come to doom both the quick and the dead. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, and in the holy congregation, and of saints the communion, and of sins the forgiveness, and of flesh the resurrection, and eternal life. Be it so.

See Reliq. Ant. i. 35.

THE END.

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